傭兵ピエール

4

原作 佐藤賢一
作画 野口賢

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YJ ヤンジャン YJC

15世紀、百年戦争下のフランス。休戦を迎えた戦場を離れ、平和な田舎町で守備隊長となったピエールのもとに、ある密命が届いた。それは、イギリス軍に捕らえられ、魔女裁判にかけられようとしている聖女、ジャンヌ・ダルクの救出だった!! 果たして二人の運命は…!? 西洋大河歴史ロマン堂々完結!!

傭兵ピエール
原作・佐藤賢一　作画・野口賢

CHARACTER[傭兵ピエール]登場人物

ラ・ピュセル

聖女ジャンヌ・ダルク。神の啓示を受けた救世主としてフランス王国の危機を救うべく戦場に立つ。その不思議な魅力で兵士達を勇猛に導く。

ピエール

本作の主人公。大貴族の私生児ながら、傭兵隊「アンジューの一角獣」を率い「シェフ殺し」の異名を持つ。ラ・ピュセルの処女を貰う約束をした。

ピエール・コーション

元ロ大学総長にして、現在のボーヴェ司教。ジャンヌ・ダルクを魔女裁判にかけ、卑劣な罠に嵌める。

マリー

ピエールが守備隊長を務めるアランヴィルにある、「ジロー親爺の旅籠」の娘。ピエールを慕っている。

トマ

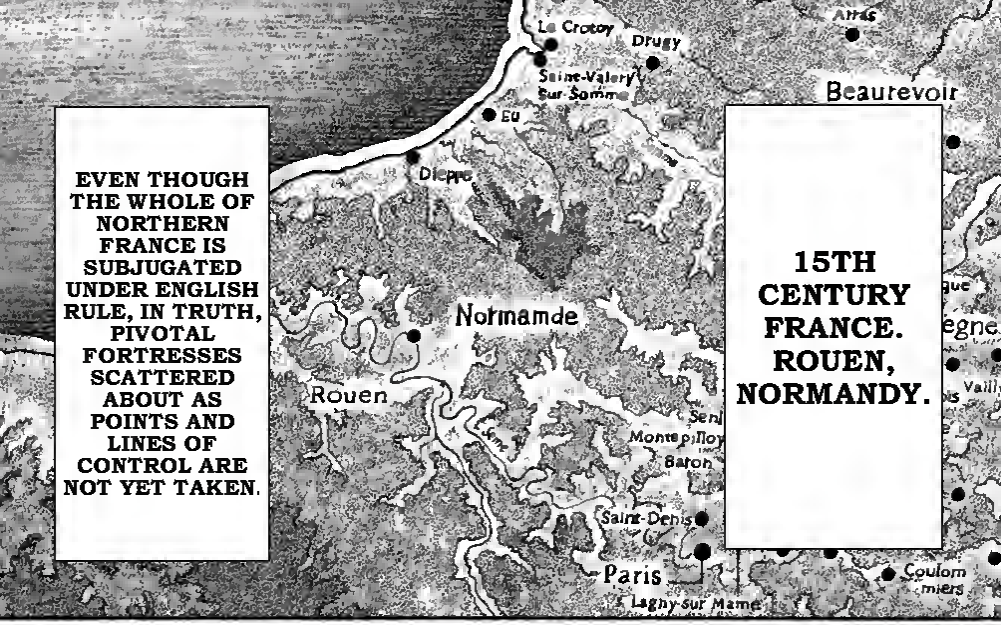
商家出身で、規律を重んじる傭兵隊の会計役。実直に財産を管理運営する手腕に秀でる。好色漢な一面も…。

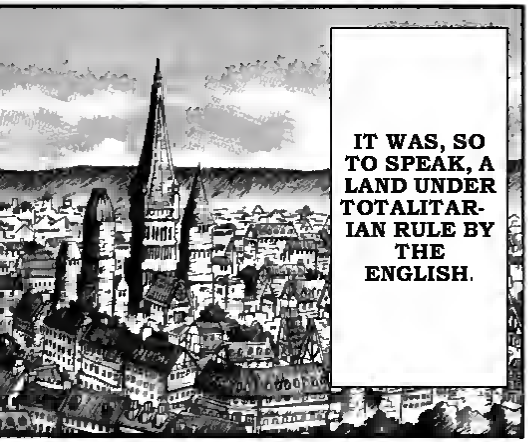
ジャン

傭兵隊ではピエールに次ぐ、シェフ代理の地位にある。戦場での指揮はピエールに全幅の信頼を置かれている。

EVEN THOUGH THE WHOLE OF NORTHERN FRANCE IS SUBJUGATED UNDER ENGLISH RULE, IN TRUTH, PIVOTAL FORTRESSES SCATTERED ABOUT AS POINTS AND LINES OF CONTROL ARE NOT YET TAKEN.

15TH CENTURY FRANCE. ROUEN, NORMANDY.

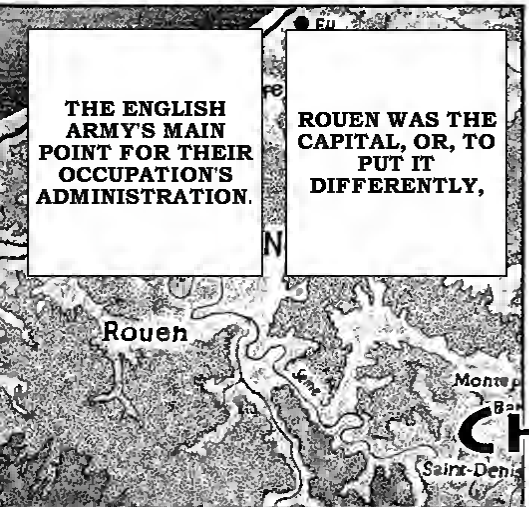




IT WAS, SO TO SPEAK, A LAND UNDER TOTALITARIAN RULE BY THE ENGLISH.

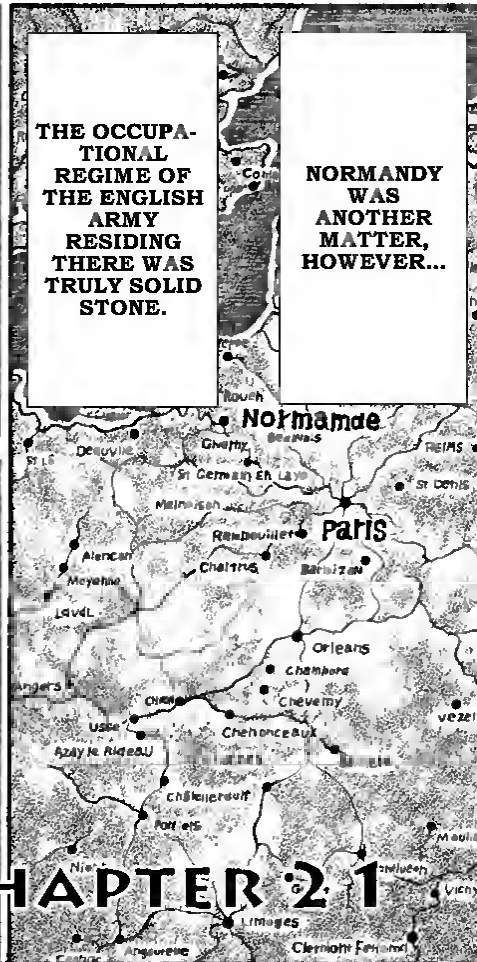
THE OCCUPATIONAL REGIME OF THE ENGLISH ARMY RESIDING THERE WAS TRULY SOLID STONE.

NORMANDY WAS ANOTHER MATTER, HOWEVER...

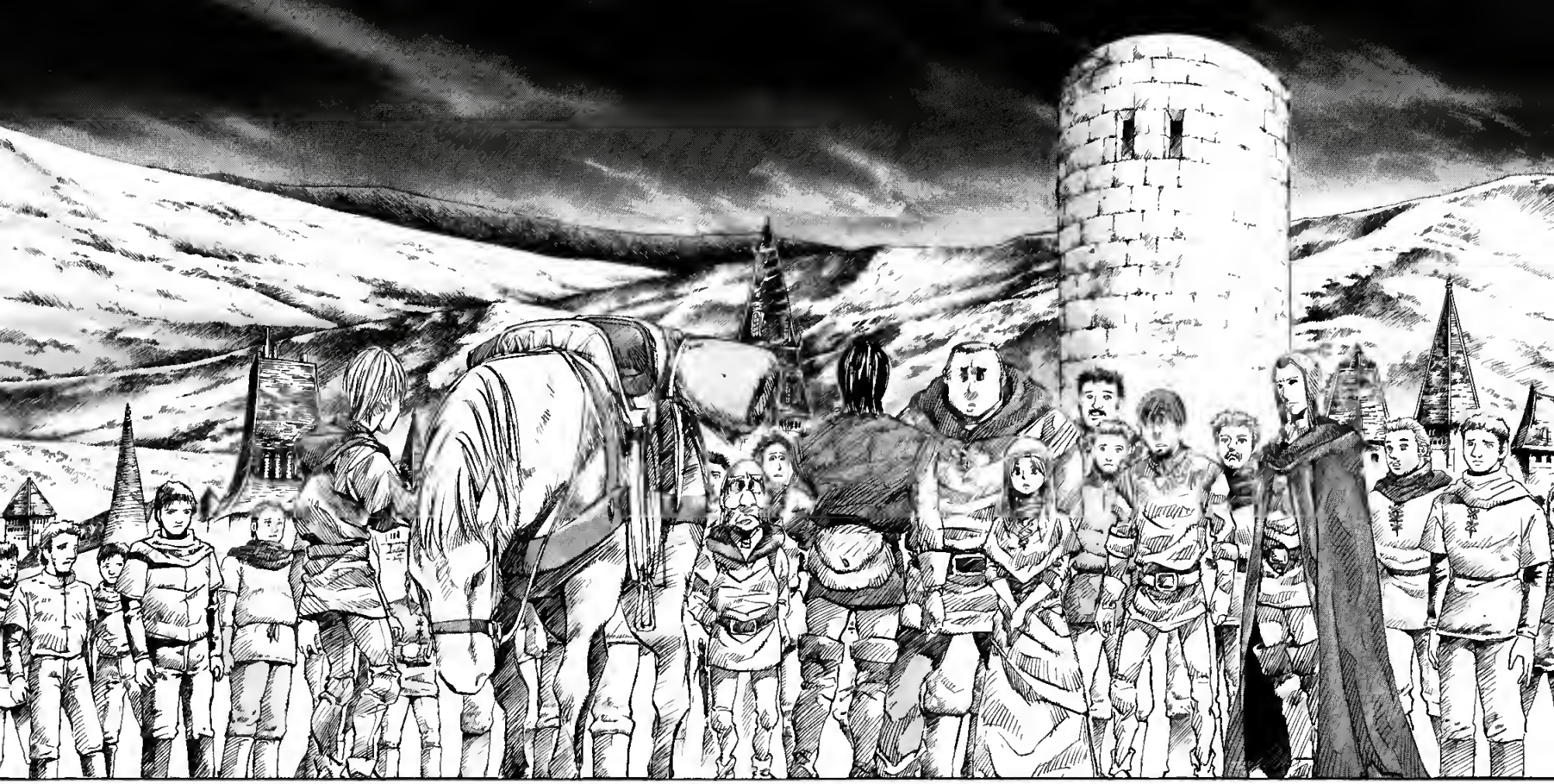


THE ENGLISH ARMY'S MAIN POINT FOR THEIR OCCUPATION'S ADMINISTRATION.

ROUEN WAS THE CAPITAL, OR, TO PUT IT DIFFERENTLY,



CHAPTER 2.1



E's no big deal, Anri.
Hehe, quite the exaggerated bastard ya are.

Ya said it was a secret job, so we's can't offer ya any advice...
Will you truly be all right?

RATHER, SOBBING VOICES RESONATED IN EVERY DIRECTION.
THOUGH HE WAS ALL JEST ABOUT THE MATTER, NO ONE HAD ON A SMILING FACE.
Who'd ya think I am? I'm Pierre, illegitimate son of De La Flute.
Hehe, ya need not worry.
WHEN A JOURNEY TO THE NORTHERN PART OF FRANCE IS MENTIONED, THEY ACCEPT IT AS A DEATH MARCH. THAT WAS JUST COMMON SENSE FOR THEM.
PEOPLE LIKE THOSE IN ALLENVILLE WOULD SEE THE MAJORITY OF THEIR LIVES SPENT NOT FIVE LEAGUES (ABOUT TWENTY KILO-METERS) BEYOND THEIR TOWN.
FOR IN THIS ERA, TRAVEL-ING WAS FILLED WITH PERIL.

PIERRE, WHO WAS QUITE UNACCUSTOMED TO SUCH A SCENE, WAS ON THE VERGE OF RETURNING THEIR WEEPING SYMPATHIES.
Tha' set'n sun's quite ominous.
A RESPONSE BEFITTING A COMPOSED GARRISON PROXY.
No problem. Besides, what reason is there to worry about such a rural village as this?
O-oh right, John. I'm leav'n ya ta watch over the town fer me.
John, et's like this...
BUT HIS TONE HELD THE FAINT WHIFF OF AN ACCUMULATING ANGER. JOHN WAS ON THE VERGE OF SPOUTING "I WANT TO GO WITH YOU".

Next time, you'll be watching over this town...
I know, I know.
Commander.
Die not in vain.
Bout two years since?
I've just remembered. Tis where we pu' together the scaffolds an' chased away those Genovian soldiers, ain't it.

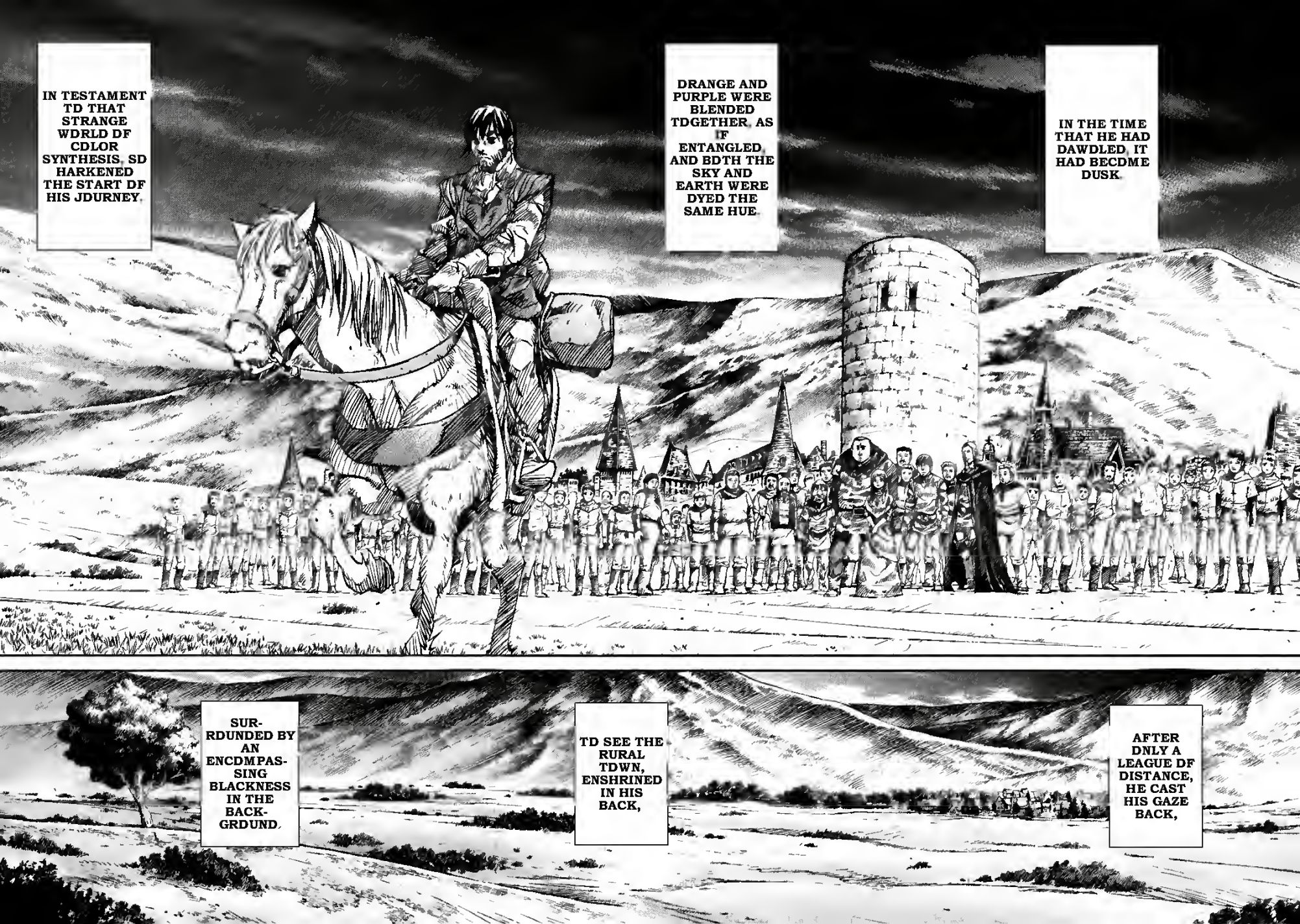
Thanks, Mayor.
Yer still the town's hero.
Aye it has, but no one has forget'n it.
Com-mander, sir.
ハアア
ヒク
ヒク
MARI HAD SENSED FULLY THE WAIT FOR PIERRE'S DEPAR-TURE.
DESPITE THEIR YOUTH, CHILDREN ARE ESPECIALLY IN-TUNE.

EVEN AS A CHILD, SHE STDDD FIRM AND TRIED HER BEST NDT TD GIVE INTD THE DREAD SHE WAS FEELING.
YET SHE HAD ENDURED AND CDNTINUED DN WITHDUT SHEDDING A TEAR.
FDR A DAY SHE HAD AVDIDED HIM DUT DF FEAR.
THDSE KINDS DF THDUGHTS WERE FDRBIDDEN TD HER.
"MY BELOVED 'CDM-MANDER' HAS BEEN SUCKED INTD A WHIRLWIND DF DANGER".
return with haste.
I'll be weeping and sad and crying tears,
so please, Commander,
AND THE SMALL CHILD'S CHEST WAS DVERFLDW-ING WITH DISMAY.
HDWEVER, UNEASE HAD SIMPLY AMASSED,

Aye.
You must, MUST come back, okay?
So big in the time I've been here.
I've been think'n her a little runt this whole time, but she's gotten quite big.
Ya jus' be a good girl and wait'.
I'll come back fer sure, really quick.

I'll return fer sure.
I'm full up with appreciation fer hav'n a home ta return to.
I can' lie 'bout tha'.
Spend'n time in this village was not a waste.
BUT FOR A MAN, IT WAS A MOMENT THAT NEEDED TO BE SEVERED.
IF HE HAD WANTED TO, HE COULD HAVE MERELY REACHED FOR A WARM EMBRACE.
Well, can' be get'n fawned over all day long.

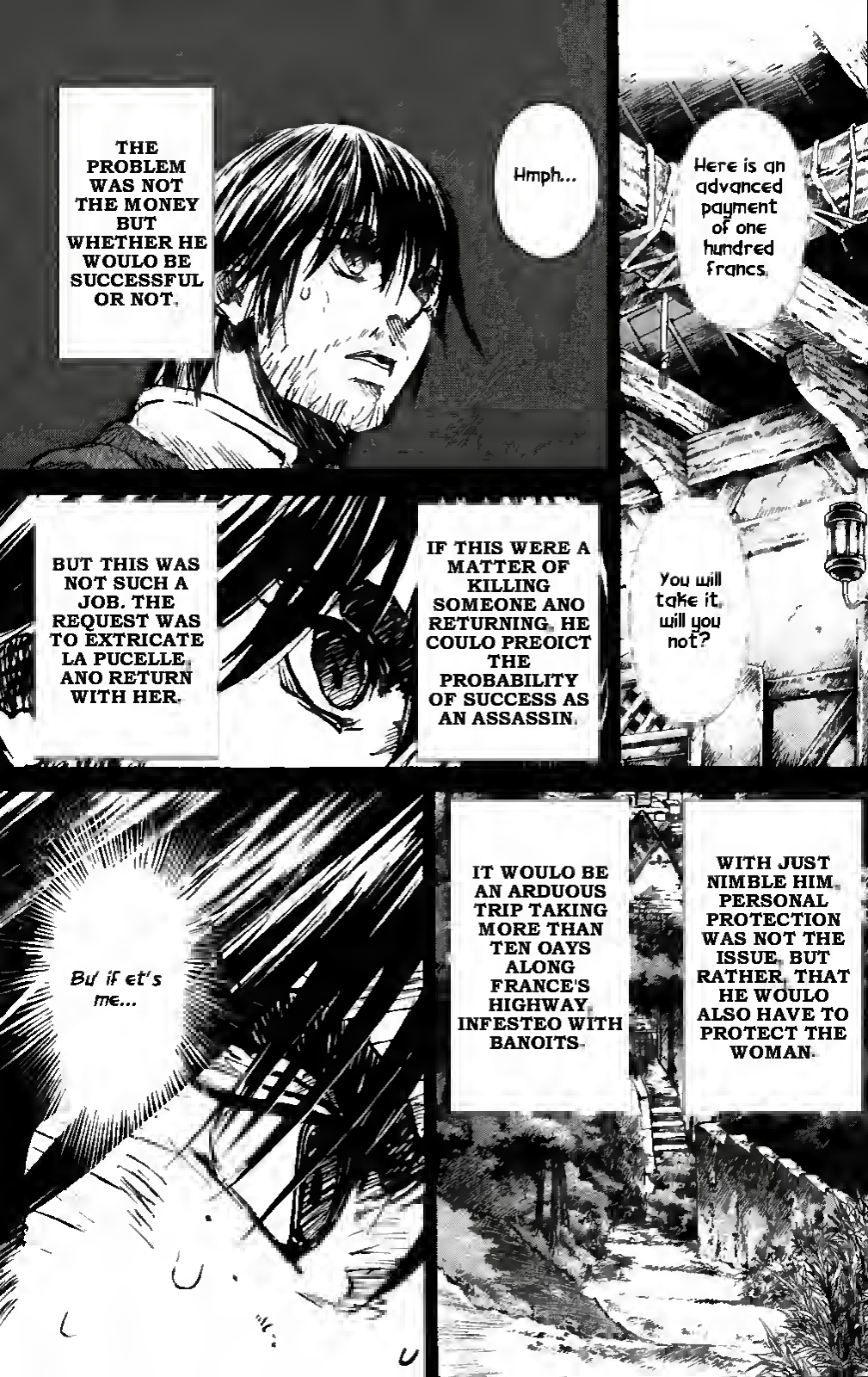
I'll be off!
May ya all be well!!


IN TESTAMENT TD THAT STRANGE WDRLD DF CDLOR SYNTHESIS, SD HARKENED THE START DF HIS JDURNEY.
DRANGE AND PURPLE WERE BLENDED TDGETHER, AS IF ENTANGLED, AND BDTH THE SKY AND EARTH WERE DYED THE SAME HUE.
IN THE TIME THAT HE HAD DAWDLED, IT HAD BECDME DUSK.
SUR-RDUNDED BY AN ENCDMPAS-SING BLACKNESS IN THE BACK-GRDUND.
TD SEE THE RURAL TDWN, ENSHRINED IN HIS BACK,
AFTER DNLY A LEAGUE DF DISTANCE, HE CAST HIS GAZE BACK,

this may well forebode our eternal part'n.
Allenville...
THAT PIERRE JOURNEYED.
IT WAS TO ROUEN, NORMANDY. THE CAPITAL UNDER ENGLISH CONTROL.

Sir Pierre, I can assume that you will undertake this action correct?
THAT NIGHT, WITH THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF THE BLACK HAIRED KNIGHT, HAD FORCED EVENTS INTO MOTION.
The extrication of La Pucelle.
What is there to consider?!
W-wai' jus' a momen'.
Milord cannot surely stand
to bear La Pu-celle exe-cuted!
Le' me think 'bout this fer a while.

His Majesty, who's quite indebted to her, wouldn' jus' sit by as an onlooker.
Ain' his highness, Charles the 7th, gonna make a move?
How can ya be so sure? Wha' do ya know of me?
He'd pay a ransom at the very leas
He has aband- oned our saviour?!
I will repeat myself once more. She is in Rouen, Normandy
Sir Pierre, indecision is forbidden, for this goal resides vast distances away

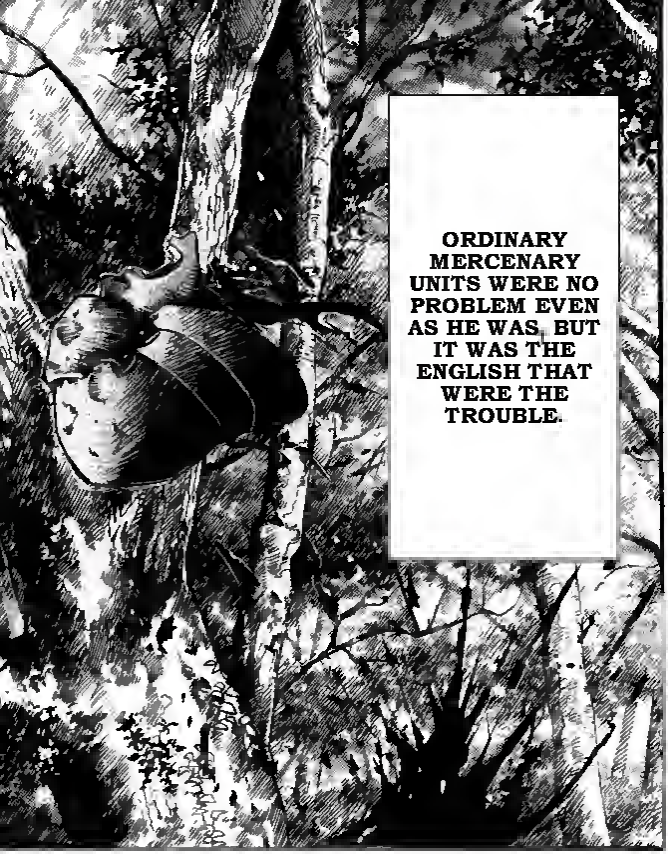

THE PROBLEM WAS NOT THE MONEY BUT WHETHER HE WOULO BE SUCCESSFUL OR NOT.
Hmph...
Here is an advanced payment of one hundred francs.
You will take it, will you not?
BUT THIS WAS NOT SUCH A JOB. THE REQUEST WAS TO EXTRICATE LA PUCELLE, ANO RETURN WITH HER.
IF THIS WERE A MATTER OF KILLING SOMEONE ANO RETURNING, HE COULO PREOICT THE PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS AS AN ASSASSIN.
But if et's me...
IT WOULO BE AN ARDUOUS TRIP TAKING MORE THAN TEN OAYS ALONG FRANCE'S HIGHWAY, INFESTEO WITH BANOITS.
WITH JUST NIMBLE HIM, PERSONAL PROTECTION WAS NOT THE ISSUE, BUT RATHER, THAT HE WOULO ALSO HAVE TO PROTECT THE WOMAN.

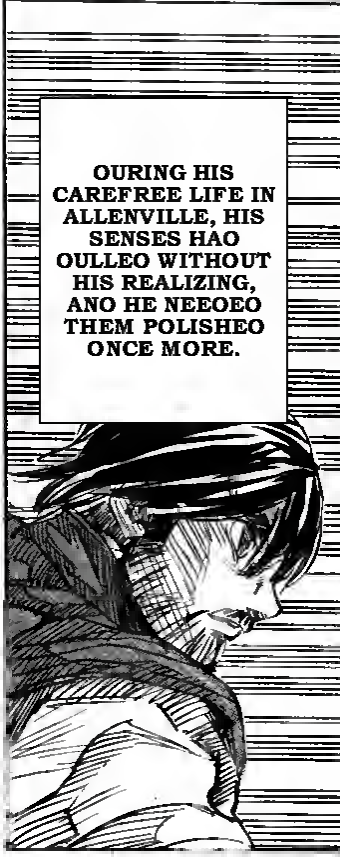
Very well.
I will undertake it.
THE MANY HARDSHIPS OF THIS JOURNEY
WERE BEFORE HIS EYES.
AND HE WAS NOT PESSIMISTIC IN THE SLIGHTEST.
Ya-!

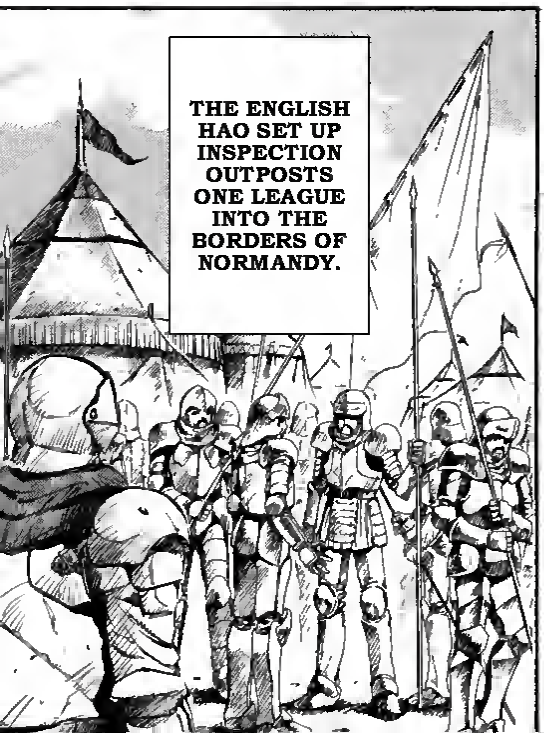
NOR INTENTIONS OF MARTYDOM FOR A WOMANLY SAINT.
HE FELT NEITHER SATISFACTION AT THE PERSONAL SACRIFICE FOR THE SAKE OF THE SAVIOR,
WERE NOT SO ELO-QUENTLY STATED.
A MAN'S FEELINGS FOR A WOMAN,
POSSESSED THIS SAME KIND OF EXCITEMENT ONCE THEY HAD BEGUN TO BE TOLD.
THOSE TALES OF KNIGHTS HE WOULD BE READ AS A CHILD
AND HIS HEART, IN SOME RESPECT, WAS BEATING FASTER.
STILL, HIS PASSION WAS BEAMING.

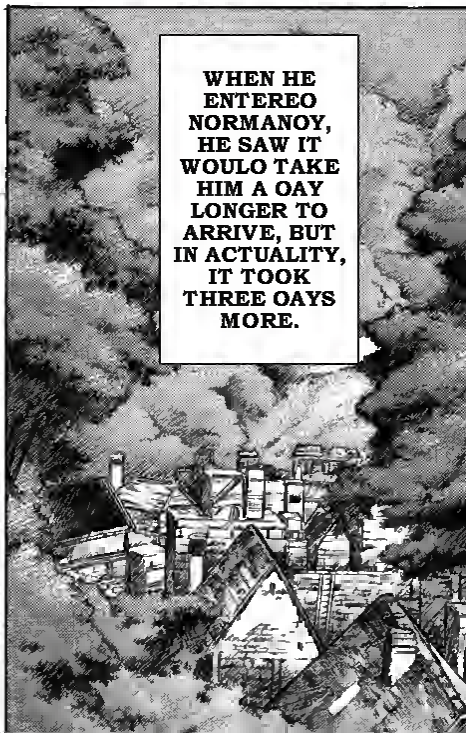
EVEN PIERRE WAS OVER-JOYED.
IT IS THESE SENSATIONS THAT HAVE DRIVEN MAN SINCE HISTORY FIRST DREW CURTAIN.
At last...

ANO ENTEREO NORMANOY WITHOUT A SPECK OF ANY LARGE TROUBLES.
HE TRANSITIONEO TO ORLEANS, PASSEO THROUGH CHARTRES,
BUT THEY WERE THE PERFECT WORKOUT PARTNERS FOR A MERCENARY.
EN ROUTE, HE HAO MET WITH TWO GROUPS OF BANOITS,


ORDINARY MERCENARY UNITS WERE NO PROBLEM EVEN AS HE WAS, BUT IT WAS THE ENGLISH THAT WERE THE TROUBLE.

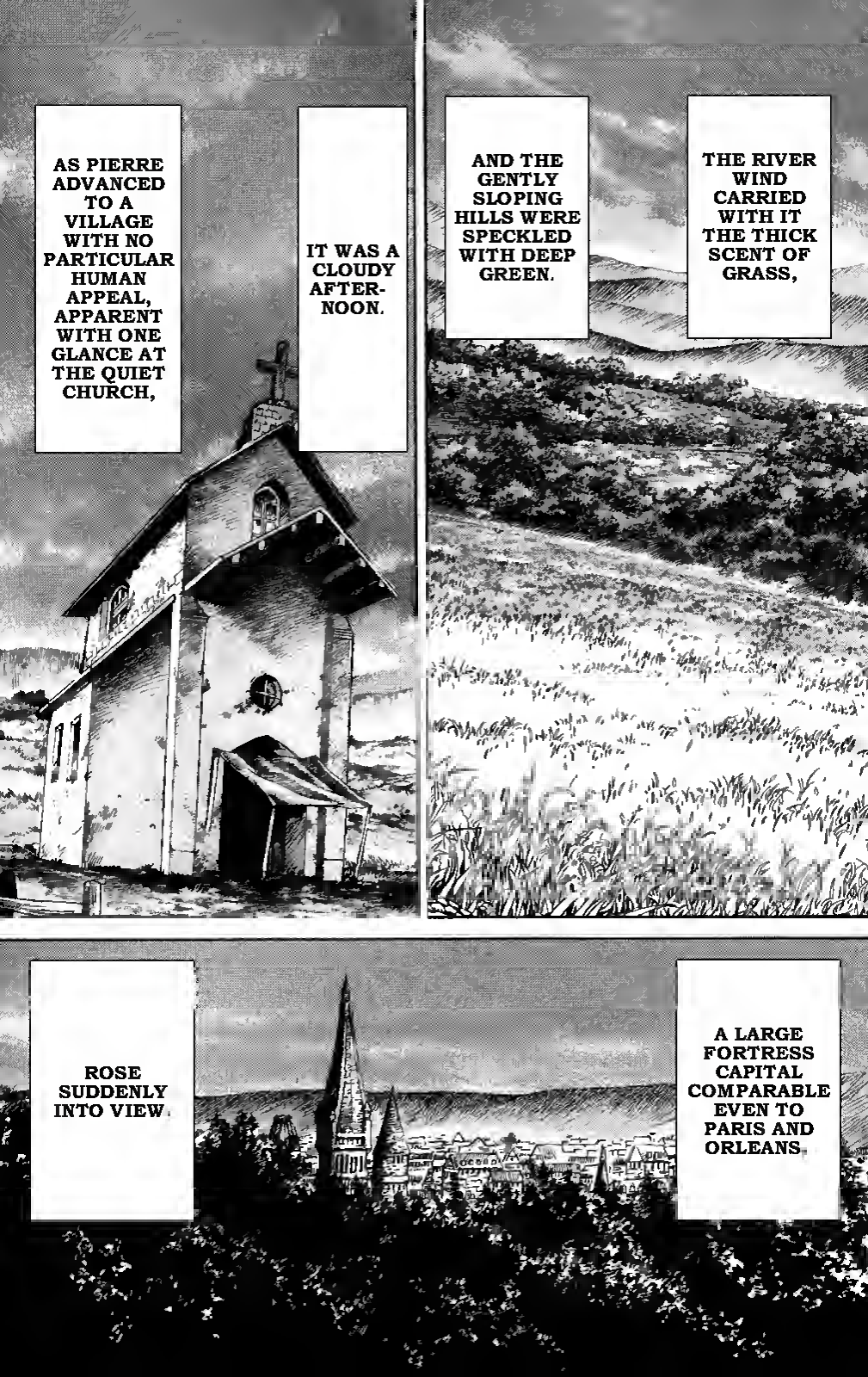

OURING HIS CAREFREE LIFE IN ALLENVILLE, HIS SENSES HAO OULLEO WITHOUT HIS REALIZING, ANO HE NEEOEO THEM POLISHEO ONCE MORE.

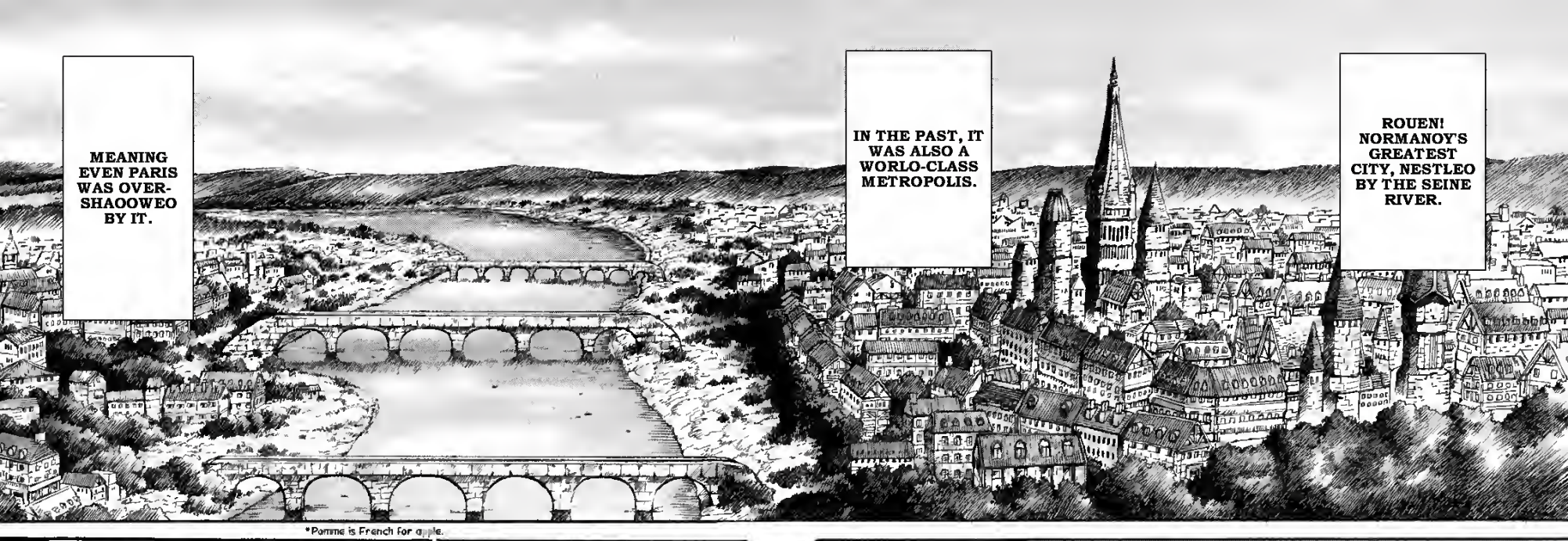

THE ENGLISH HAO SET UP INSPECTION OUTPOSTS ONE LEAGUE INTO THE BORDERS OF NORMANDY.


WHEN HE ENTEREO NORMANOY, HE SAW IT WOULO TAKE HIM A OAY LONGER TO ARRIVE, BUT IN ACTUALITY, IT TOOK THREE OAYS MORE.

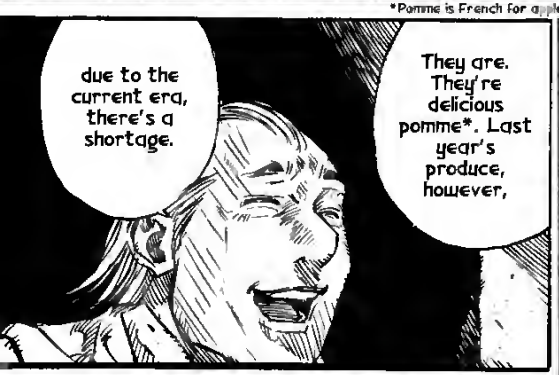
Say, milord, I got this cutie wait'n fer me in Evreux.
AND THOSE KINDS OF MEN ESPECIALLY ARE WELL OFF IN THE WORLD AND WELL PROMOTED.
It ain' be tha' big a deal if ya overlooked this old, horny workhorse, would it?
FOR HOWEVER STRICT AN ORGANIZA-TION MAY BE, THERE ARE ALWAYS THOSE SLOPPY INDIVIDUALS.
MONEY WOULD DO THE TALKING FOR HIM. PIERRE WOULD USE BRIBERY AND STRUGGLE TO CARRY ON.
BUT HE WAS ALLOWED TO CONTINUE ON ONCE MORE.
WITH THAT, HIS LODGING EXPENSES MAY HAVE BEEN DECREASED BY MORE THAN HALF,
Well, compared to we English who aren't obstructed by love, you guys aren't that boorish.
Hoho, if this is all you got wrapped up, why don't ya just buy yerself a bitch?

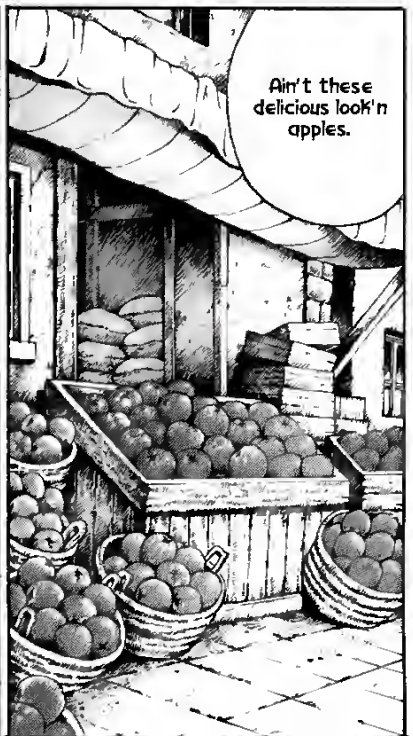
Hei!
Spare me!!
Hey, Friar, I never said I'd take yer life.
Jus',
I am but a simple Franciscan.
On journey's way to Espagne (Spain).
yer garments.

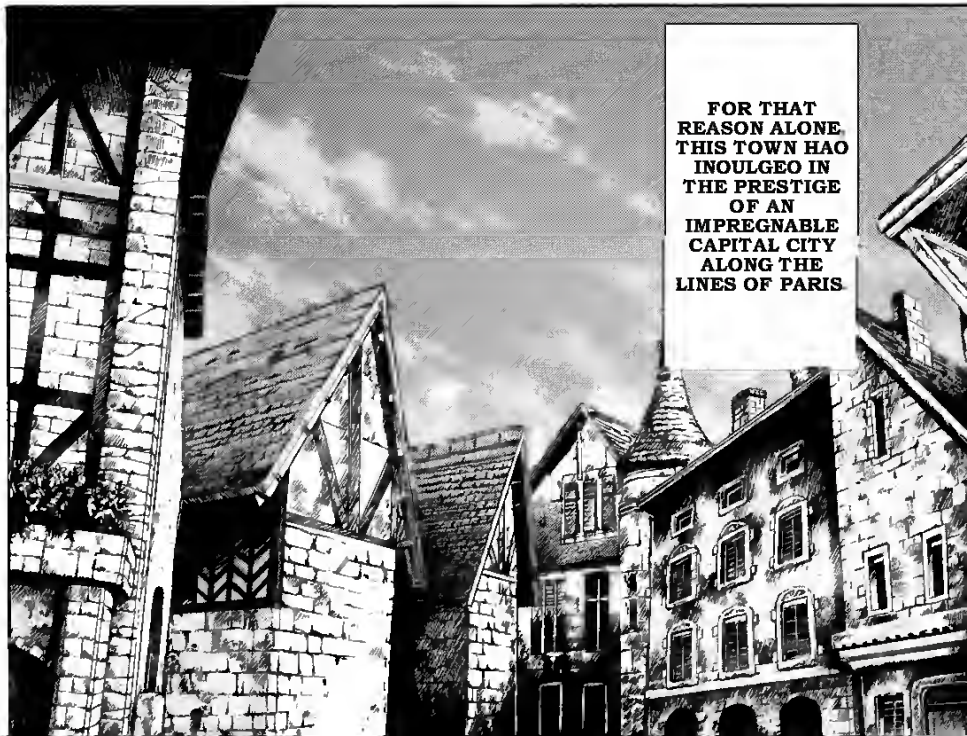

AS PIERRE ADVANCED TO A VILLAGE WITH NO PARTICULAR HUMAN APPEAL, APPARENT WITH ONE GLANCE AT THE QUIET CHURCH,
IT WAS A CLOUDY AFTER-NOON.
AND THE GENTLY SLOPING HILLS WERE SPECKLED WITH DEEP GREEN.
THE RIVER WIND CARRIED WITH IT THE THICK SCENT OF GRASS,
ROSE SUDDENLY INTO VIEW.
A LARGE FORTRESS CAPITAL COMPARABLE EVEN TO PARIS AND ORLEANS.


MEANING EVEN PARIS WAS OVER-SHAOOWEO BY IT.
IN THE PAST, IT WAS ALSO A WORLO-CLASS METROPOLIS.
ROUEN! NORMANOY'S GREATEST CITY, NESTLEO BY THE SEINE RIVER.

*Pomme is French for apple.

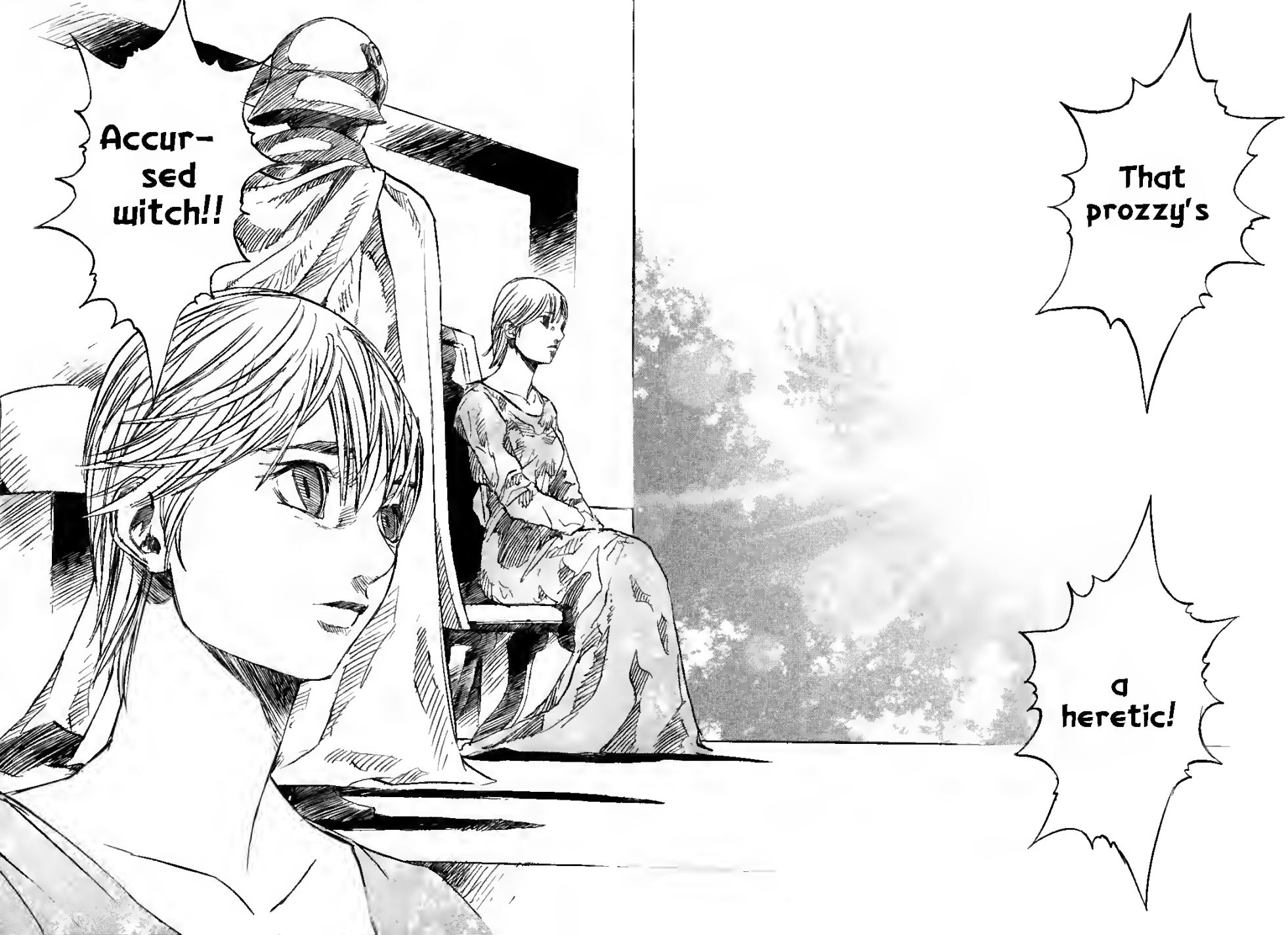






U-um honorable sir...!
I'll be tak'n it, then.
If ya don't eat this now,
you won't find any pomme that taste like pomme really soon. Have one.
Howa?
HOWA HAD THE MEANING OF "KUWA (WHAT?)".
In this era...
Hmph.
N-never mind. Thank you for your patronage!

THAT WAS THE REALITY OF ROUEN.
IT WAS CLEAR WHO OCCUPIED WHO. THOSE WHO ACCEPTED THE ENGLISH ARMY, WHILE HUMILIATING, ENJOYED A TRANQUIL LIFE, WHILE THOSE WHO REJECTED THE INVADERS FELL TO ANNIHILATION.
Witch
Trial!


Accur-
sed
witch!!
That
prozzy's
a
heretic!

Chapter 22

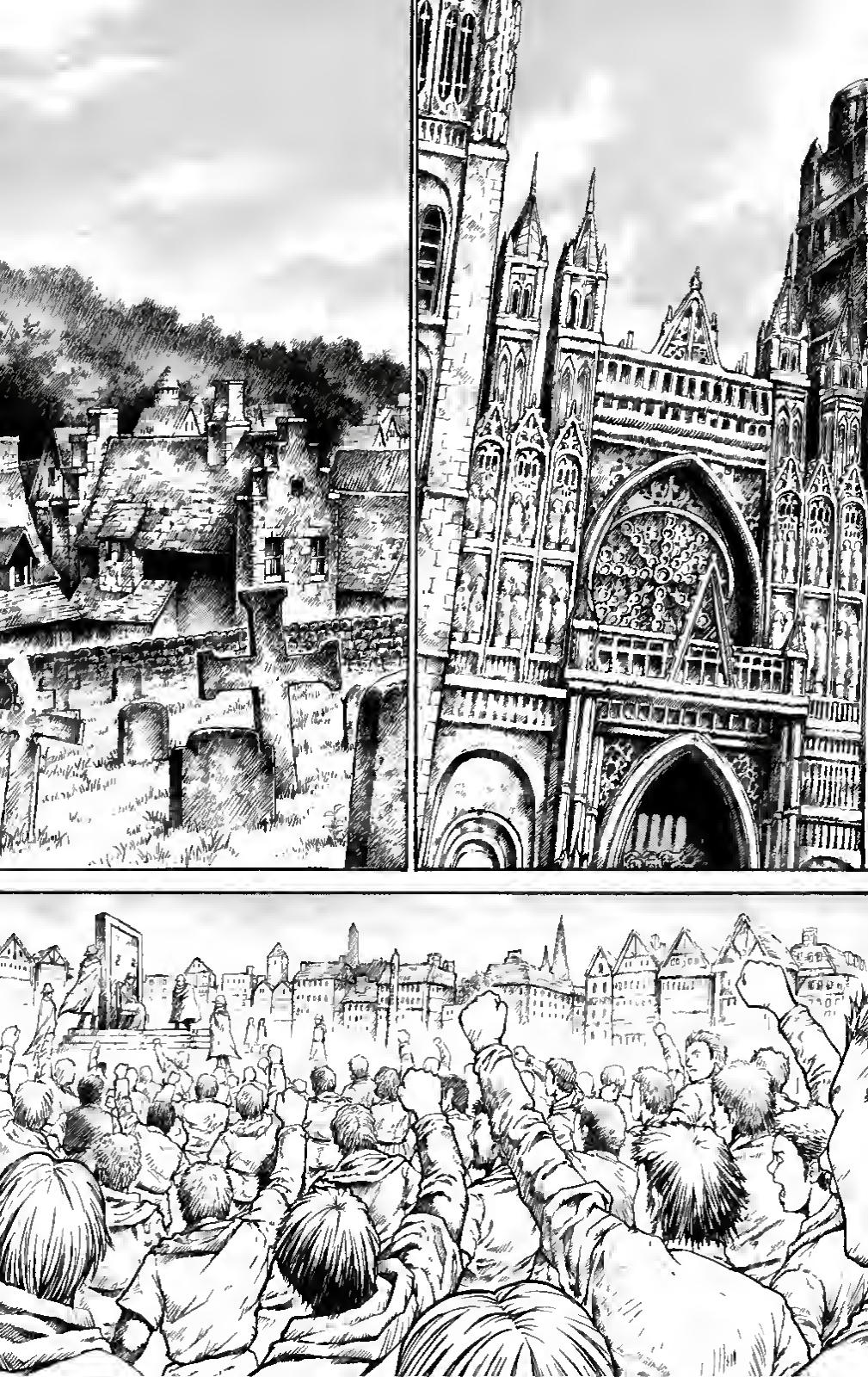
You there walking,
how has the inquisition of La Pucelle progressed?
Oh, a travel'n friar.
Ya mean tha' witch's trial?
Don' look like tha' woman's get'n out of it.
I think it happened bout five days ago maybe?
For a second, she had a change of heart,

and her punishment turned to life imprisonment, and she escaped burn'n at the stake somehow.
and when asked if she'd swear loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church, she replied "I will abide by their will",
PIERRE WAS CLOAKED IN THE ASHEN ROBES SNATCHED FROM THE FRANCISCIAN, AND WAS MASQUERADING AS A BEGGING PRIEST.
Crap, the inquisition's mov'n along. I thought she might be able to escape the penalty of heresy...
And then, yesterday,
she returned to her blasphemy.

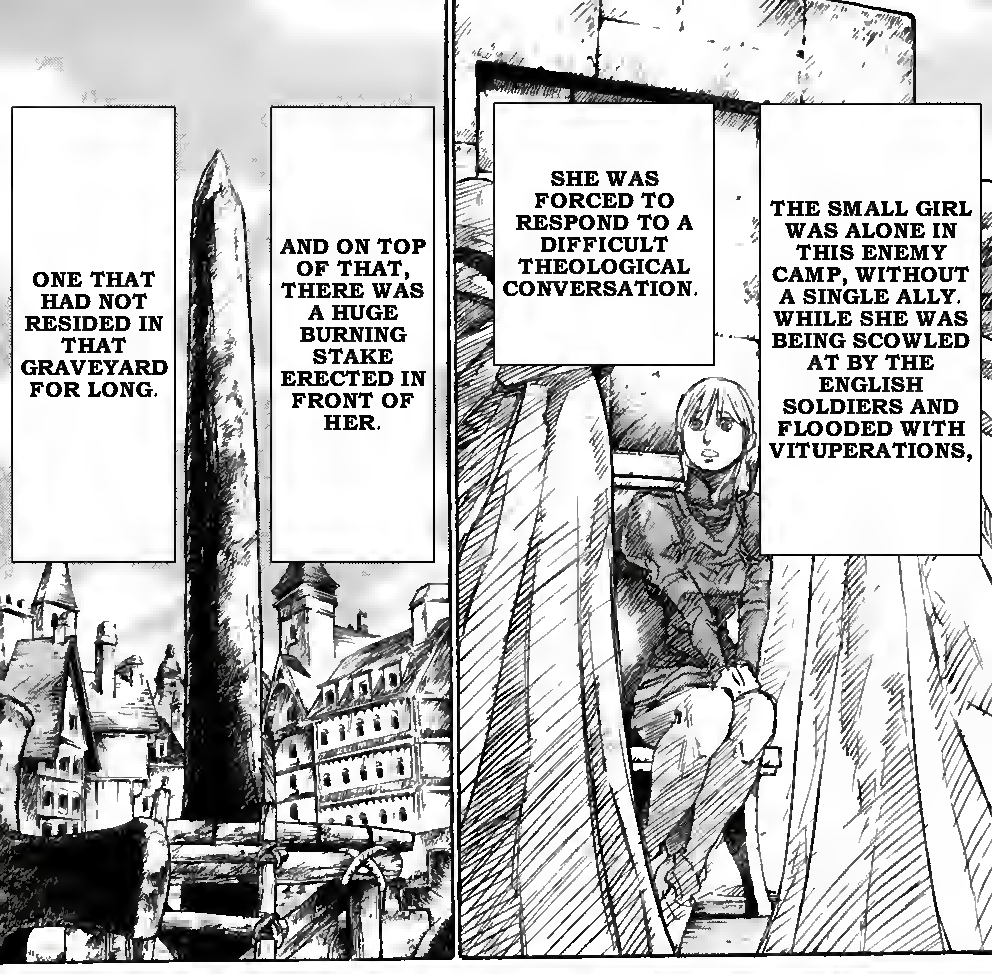
why'd La Pucelle return ta her heresy?!
In any event... Ain' noth'n tha' could'a been done 'bout tha' false inquisition, but if she'd a chance ta 'scape the penalties.
How did that happen?
Because she's been in the army, she's always worn men's cloth'n.
She was blamed for that, and at the time of her reform, she'd put on women's cloth'n,
bu' the day before yesterday, she abandoned them and got on men's cloth'n again.

I suppose it was a judgment in accordance with church law.
Fill me in, would ya, Friar?
That was the reason fer label'n her a heretic again it seems. Bu' I's don' get the mean'n.
Discretion and dignity eh?... I see... You sure know lots 'bout this. I better tell mi old wife while I remember,
Huuuuh, I see.
A woman who dons male clothing is considered a desecration upon a woman's discretion and more importantly the sex's dignity, I suppose.
Death sentence ?!
else I'll forget the reason fer her death sentence of burn'n at the stake.

Rumor's been say'n probably happen tomorrow.
Huh?
Uh... I mean, when will that be?
Nick of time tha' was.
Tomor-row?



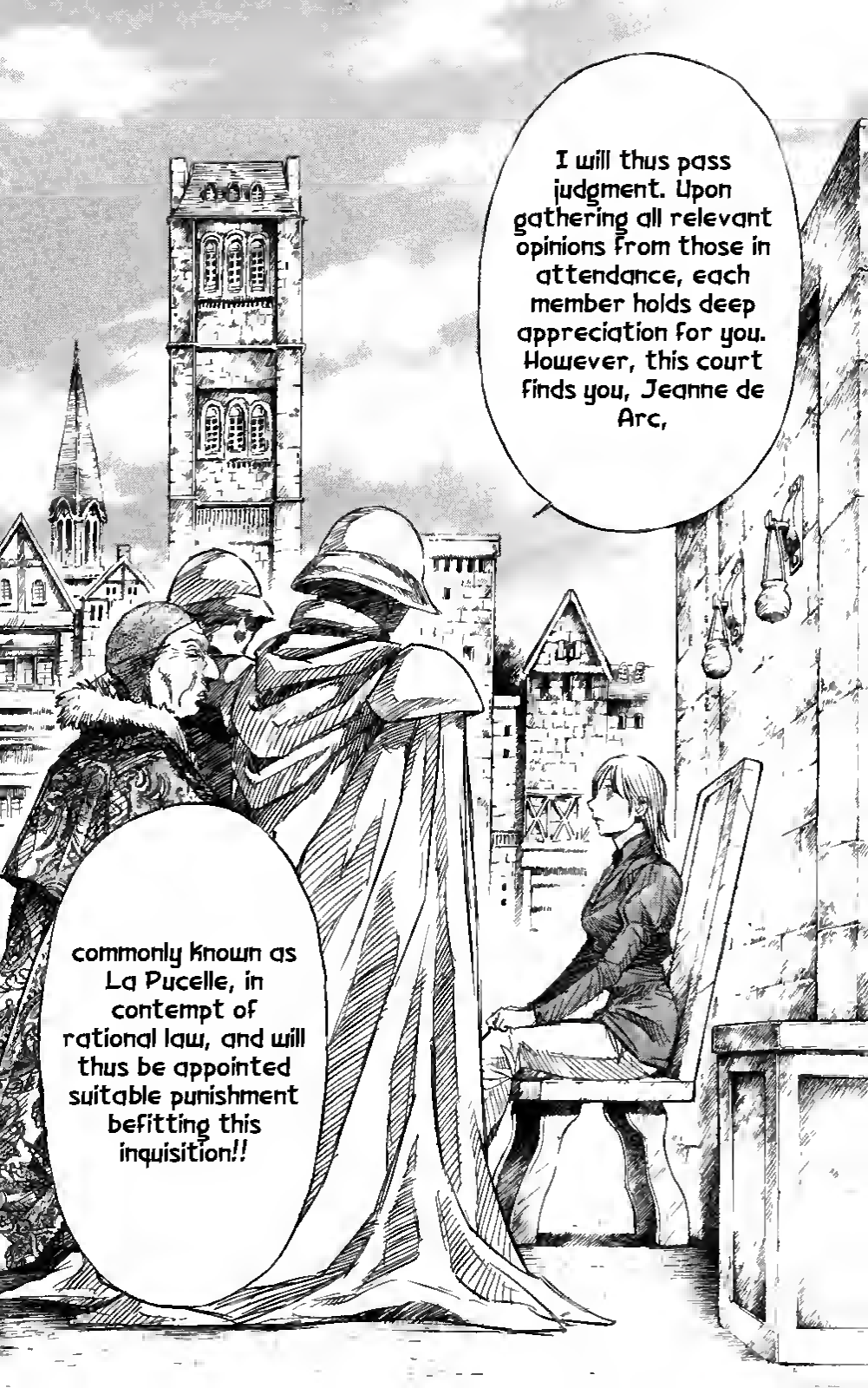
La Pucelle's frightened.
She's got reason to be though.
HER FINGERTIPS PLACED ATOP HER KNEES MAY HAVE BEEN SHAKING LITTLE BY LITTLE, BUT IT WAS QUITE OBVIOUS.
AND AMONGST THIS GLOOMY ATMOSPHERE, AN INQUISITION WAS TAKING PLACE.
LA PUCELLE'S ACCUSATION SEAT WAS PLACED IN A GRAVEYARD, WHERE THE THOUGHT OF DEATH WAS EVER LOOMING.


THE SMALL GIRL WAS ALONE IN THIS ENEMY CAMP, WITHOUT A SINGLE ALLY. WHILE SHE WAS BEING SCOWLED AT BY THE ENGLISH SOLDIERS AND FLOODED WITH VITUPERATIONS,
SHE WAS FORCED TO RESPOND TO A DIFFICULT THEOLOGICAL CONVERSATION.
AND ON TOP OF THAT, THERE WAS A HUGE BURNING STAKE ERECTED IN FRONT OF HER.
ONE THAT HAD NOT RESIDED IN THAT GRAVEYARD FOR LONG.

Et's obviously meant ta threaten her...
This ain' no different from blackmail'n a thief by coerc'n 'im with a bladed edge!

Then I am to assume you will not take the oath of abjure?
I will not.
You are truly satisfied then?
I am.
For I was a fool.

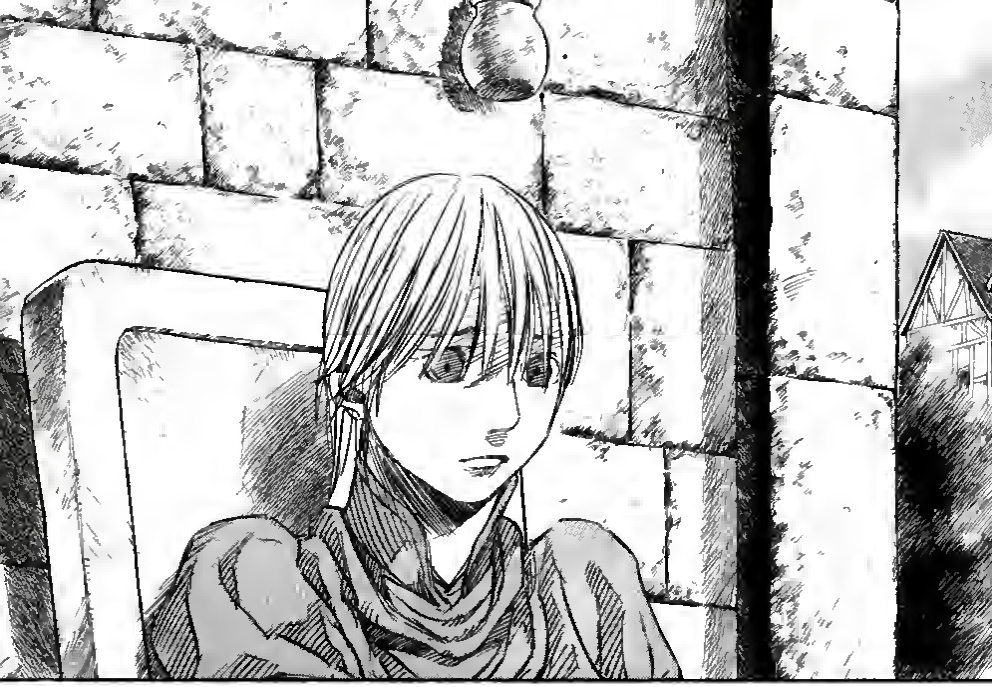
I was frightened by the prospect of burning... and I was holding my life as precious...
And I had not realized your full intention. In that jail cell-
H- ehum. I would have you not speak of unnecessary things.


I will thus pass judgment. Upon gathering all relevant opinions from those in attendance, each member holds deep appreciation for you. However, this court finds you, Jeanne de Arc,
commonly known as La Pucelle, in contempt of rational law, and will thus be appointed suitable punishment befitting this inquisition!!

thus, the duty will be placed on a secular court,
The Vatican will be unable to observe your appeal,
It will be carried out in the morrow,
to carry out your sentence.
at eight of the clock!

Kill her! Burn the witch!!
Send that Armagnac prozzy ta hell already!!
I'll kill ya...
Ahaha, serves her right! Don' ya thinks so too, Friar?!
By the way, brother.
Who was the man reading her verdict just now?

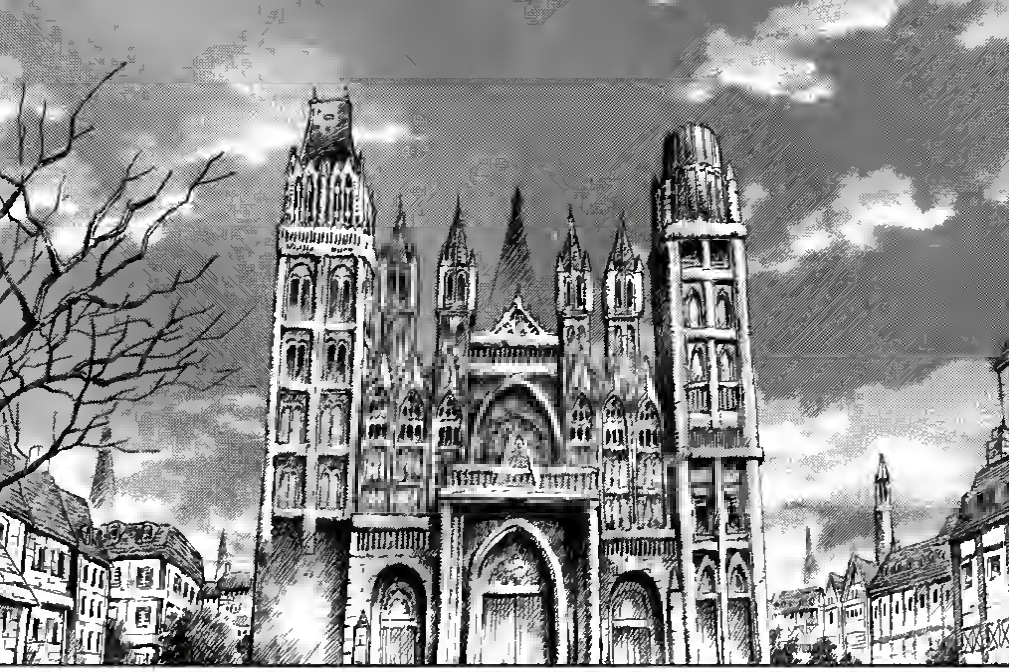
Ya don' know? He is a Bishop with no equal, of high nobility,
none other than his Eminence, Bishop Pierre Cauchon.
He's my enemy !!!
ONCE THE HEAD MASTER OF PARIS COLLAGE, HE WAS NOW THE BISHOP OF BEAUVAIS.
KNOWN AS PIERRE CAUCHON.



I'm right here.

La Pucelle...

I will take ya outta here soon.
Wait fer me, Jeanne.
Jus' a bit longer.



ギィィ
It wasn' a waste ta stick 'round afterward.
Time ta ge' ta work.

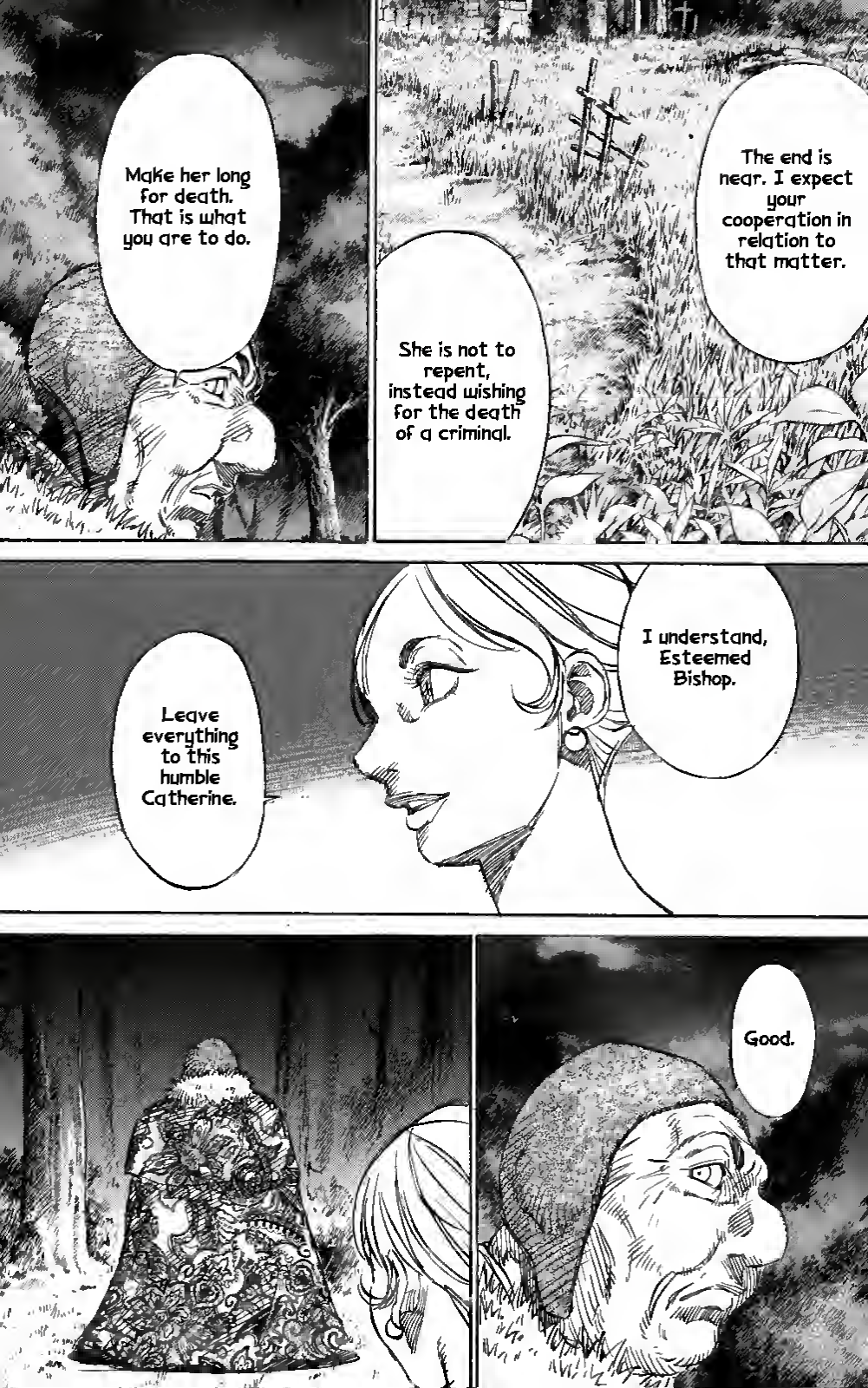
What business does an esteemed bishop have in the poor district?

Won' be com'n out till morn'n at this rate.

Have I wasted my time tail'n Cauchon?...

So et's a woman friend?...

Is he gonna give me someth'n or what?
Oi oi, he only spent a few minutes in there.
There is much work to finish
I would very much like to spend my time in leisure, but I must take my leave this day


Make her long for death. That is what you are to do.
The end is near. I expect your cooperation in relation to that matter.
She is not to repent, instead wishing for the death of a criminal.
I understand, Esteemed Bishop.
Leave everything to this humble Catherine.
Good.

Seems the Lord has yet to abandon La Pucelle and I.

Friar. What in the world are you doing in such a lonely place?...
Seeking alms, kind Madam.
If perhaps you have any scraps remaining, might you bless me, this helpless priest?
Oh, is that why?
Very well.

P... Please... do not pull my garment so forcefully.
Um... I need not go in with you...
Let us enjoy some dinner. Come, step inside.
THE DEEP SCENT OF THE WOMAN'S SWEET FRAGRANCE FLOWED INTO HIS NOSTRIL.
Eh?
THE MAN WITHIN PIERRE COULD NOT RESIST HIS WEAKNESS FOR WOMEN.
Really, you need not go to so much trouble for me...
ハァン

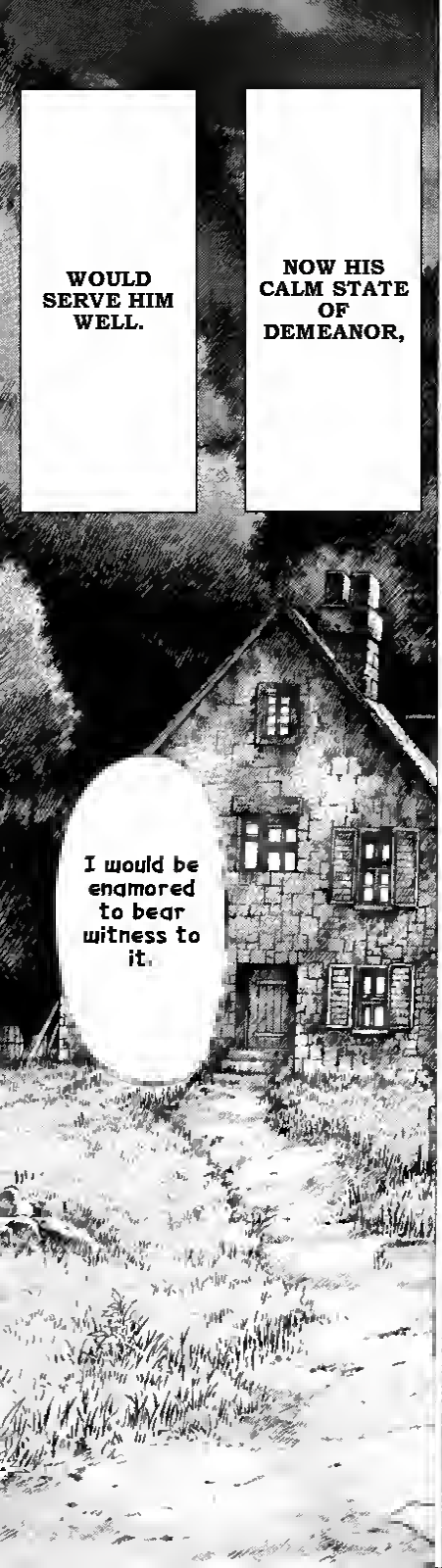
Is the manly Friar still not sleepy then?
IN THE END, PIERRE SURRENDERED WITHOUT ANY RESISTANCE.
Yes, I am awake.
You likely think me quite the loose woman, don't you.

I am not an innocent, virgin girl,
unable to discern a man spouting lies.
Not in the least.
Those who don't want to be cold,
disdain me.
Disdain and scorn me...
You know, you remind very much of a man once in my acquaintance.
You see, he was my good one... my fiance.
But it matters not. Whether I am a prostitute or such, I regret nothing.

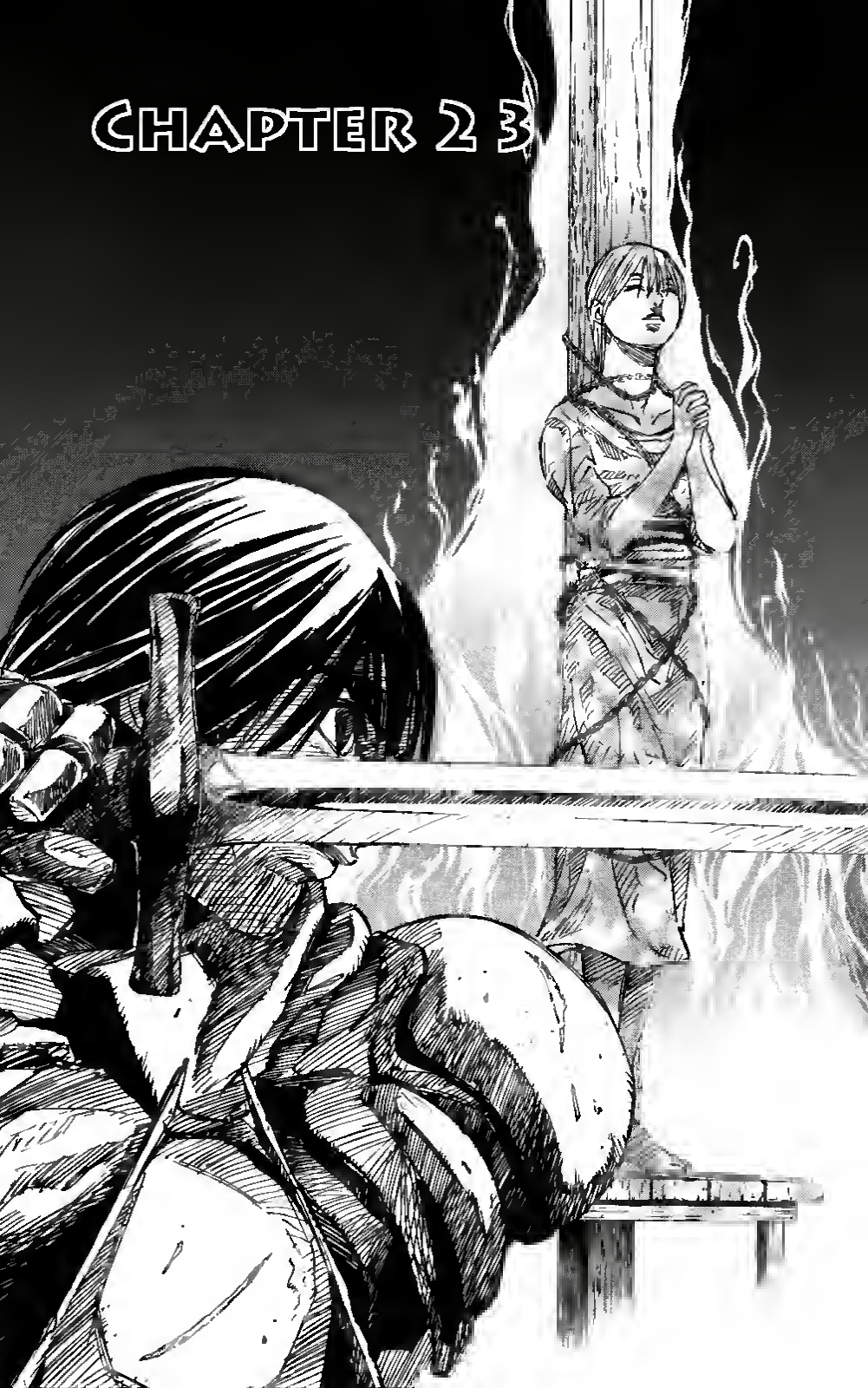
So I do not mind being scorned.
...that is why I desired embrace. But we never connected, the two of us.
I was too high-strung and unforgiving. Which is why I wanted to consummate, at least with a man who resembled him.
S-stop please!!
What pretense! Please stop with this kind of transparent act.

Instead of lift'n her spirits, weren't there things I had to do?!!
Oh crap, what'll I do if her mood lifts?
I know, I know... I was wrong.
You truly are a kind person. I'm sorry, for saying such odd things.
WAS ACTUALLY A BLESSING THIS TIME.
BUT HIS UNTAM-ABLE WEAK-NESS,
This is an absolute secret, but you're special
It involves the fake savior La Pucelle
Say, Friar. Would you like to see quite the spectacle?

THE THREAD HE THOUGHT SEVERED,
WAS CONNECTED ONCE MORE WITHOUT HIS REALIZING.


WOULD SERVE HIM WELL.
NOW HIS CALM STATE OF DEMEANOR,
I would be enamored to bear witness to it.

Chapter 23



PIERRE, WHD WAS DRESSED IN MDNK GARB, FDLLOWED BEHIND IN A SDMEWHAT BRISK MANNER AS CATHERINE ACTED AS GUIDE.
ONLY THE SDUND DF TWD PAIRS DF FEET STRIKING THE GRDUND REVERBERATED LOUDLY.
Where we go'n?
THERE WERE ND WDRDS EXCHANGED BETWEEN THE TWD.
SEARCHING FDR CHURCHES AND MDNAST-ERIES.
HE TDDK A GODD LODK AT THE SUR-RDUNDING STRUCTURES,

SAINT LAURENT ANO SAINT GOOARD CHURCHES PASSEO,
ANO EVEN SAINT PATRICE CHURCH TO THE LEFT, BUT THEN, NO OTHERS,
MAKING PIERRE WANT TO PEEL HIS EYES EVEN MORE.
THEN, THE NORTH CITY WALL CAME INTO VIEW.
THE STRUCTURE HE WAS SEEKING HAD NOT YET APPEAREO.
Here we are.

ANY MERCENARY KNEW OF IT.
Bouvreuil Stronghold!! ...
AND BEING OCCUPIED BY ITS SOLDIERS.
ORIGINALLY, IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED BY PHILIP II, KING OF FRANCE, BUT WAS NOW MOST ASSUREDLY UNDER ENGLISH CONTROL.
THE STRONGHOLD WAS A STURDY, MILITARY INSTALLATION KNOWN WORLD-WIDE, CASTING PROTECTION ON THE IMPENETRABLE CITY.
THERE WAS TOUREL FORTRESS OF ORLEAN'S BRIDGE, BASTILLE STRONGHOLD OF PARIS'S EAST GATE, AND BOUVREUIL STRONGHOLD OF ROUEN'S NORTHERN WALL.
Come this way.

must be surveillanced by guards and confined in a tower.
She is a special case. You see, that crooked woman,
J-just a moment, Madam. Why is a religious heretic being held in a military stronghold?
LA PUCELLE, WHO WAS NOT ORDAINED BY THE CHURCH, WAS BEING CONFINED IN AN ENGLISH ARMY STRONGHOLD.
Come, here it is.

AND TURNED THE ENTRANCE KEY TO A STONE ARCHWAY.
CATHERINE WALKED INTO A RING OF TOWERS,
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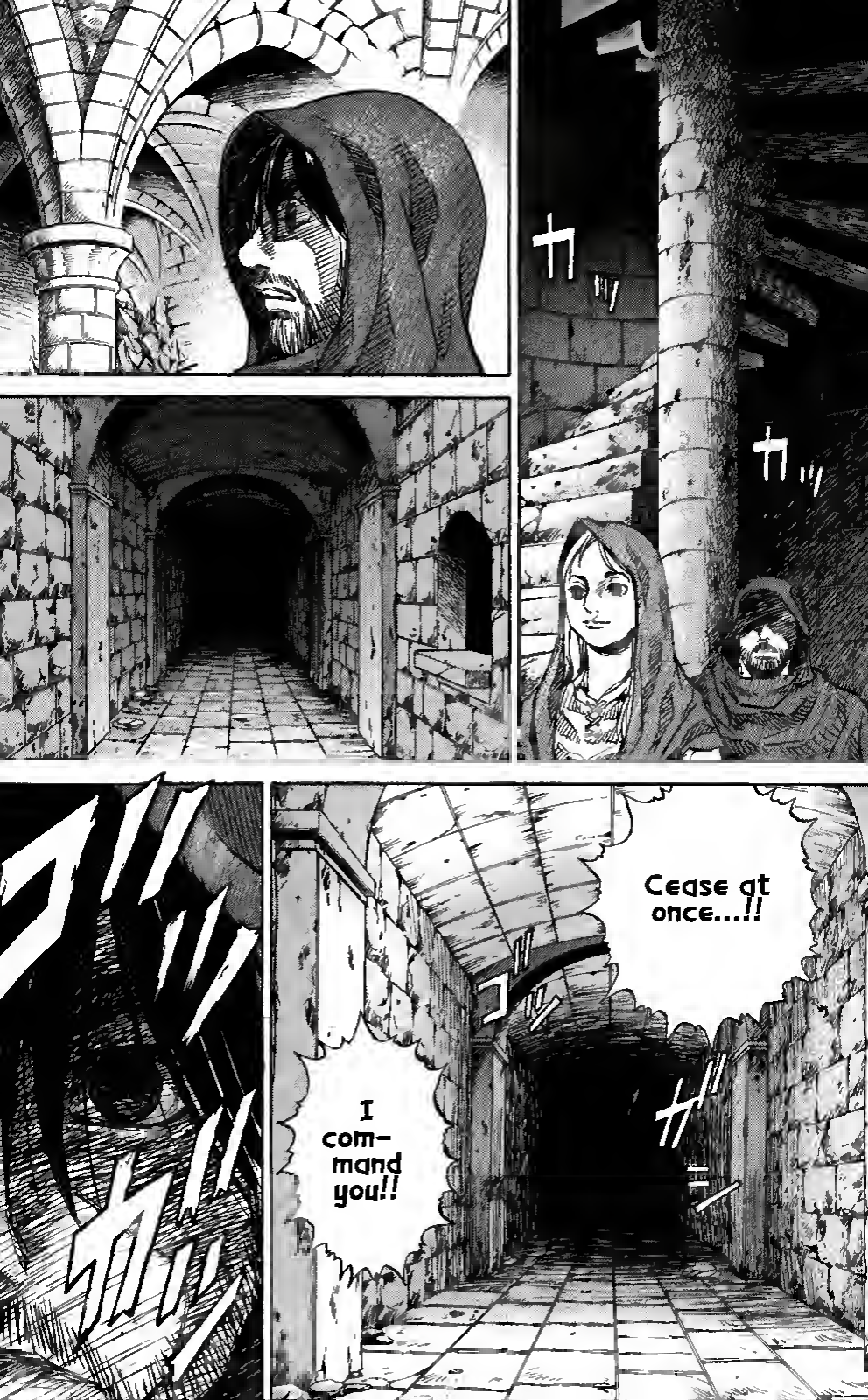
Cease at once...!!
I com-mand you!!

Madam, that sound?
Oh, they're really going at it.
Man oh man, ge' her!!

AND IT WAS THAT QUALITY OF ELEGANCY OR DILAPIDATION THAT DETERMINED ONE'S STANDING.
THE ENGLISH CONSIDERED THE FRENCH OF SPOKEN COURT EXQUISITE,
INFERIOR FRENCH.
Don' mind her, jus' rip off them clothes!!
BASICALLY, THE GREEDY ENGLISH SOLDIER TYPE.
SINCE THIS WAS LOW BIRTH SPEAK, THE MAN WAS AIMING FOR EASY MONEY.
That's fine...
Ah, Madam! We had not seen you here, so we begun without you.
I see it's being done, John.

George, it's so dark I can't see a thing!!
A friend, he's alright.
Pay him no heed.
And the man you are leading?
Bring her into the light!
As you wish.

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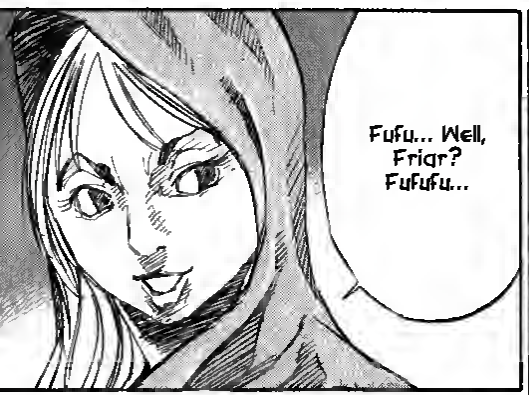
HE ALMOST,
LET OUT HIS VOICE.
La Pucelle!
IN THE GRIP OF THE LARGE MAN,
WAS A SMALL NAP OF A NECK.
BOTH OF HER HANDS WERE OUT-STRETCHED IN FRONT OF HER CHEST.
DESPERATELY ATTEMPTING TO GRASP THE AIR.

But when I try ta take her undergarment, it's like they have something else in mind.
She can still flail around? George, you're very sloppy!
I've had to handle it with care. Her trousers all the way to her long johns are packed so closely,
Hmph.
and she's been struggling like the dickens. I've not had an easy time with her.
Which is why I said,
you could just rip them off.

Listen ta me ya filthy witch!
Else you're gonna get this!

Really?


Fufu... Well, Friar? Fufufu...

Eh... yeah...

Quite the spectacle, is it not? Fufu, just like a little whore. Look how she rides him so tenaciously.
Far from any maiden or holy woman. She's been playing like this every night with the men.
Quite. She's slept with everyone multiple times.
It makes me silly considering her our savior.
PIERRE'S CONSCIOUSNESS CONTINUED TO BLACK OUT EVERY FEW SECONDS.
.... ah!

AND HE FOUND PEACE OF MIND.
PIERRE HAD HEARD THAT UPON VERIFYING LA PUCELLE'S PURITY, SHE HAD FORBIDDEN ALL VIOLENCE AGAINST FRANCE'S HERO,
THE DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, ACCOMPANIED BY A MIDWIFE, HAD TAKEN UP THE DUTY OF INVESTIGATING THE MAIDEN.
FROM THE INFORMATION HE HAD GLEAMED FROM ORLEANS, THERE WAS AN INQUISITION.
F-
Fuck'n hell!
HE HAD BEEN TOO CAREFREE IN HIS ESTIMATIONS.
YET UPON COMING HERE, HE COULD SEE LA PUCELLE WAS UNDER THE ROUGH SURVEILLANCE OF THESE ENGLISH MEN IN THIS TOWER.

HE KNEW THAT THIS WOMAN'S PURITY WOULD BE ATRO-CIOUSLY STAINED,
FOR ALL OF ETERNITY.

I will...
Ta my Jeanne...
Ya vulgar... Ta my Jeanne...
Strike them down!! This ain' a job no longer!!

HE WOULD MAKE THEM PAY.
BEYOND A DOUBT.
I ain' got a chance right now.
There're two sentry guards presen' with swords lowered.
A CRUEL DETERMINATION LODGED ITSELF IN PIERRE'S HEART. HE BEGAN FURIOUS CALCULATIONS IN A COOL-HEADED MANNER.
Even with odds of 10,000 to 1, ya can' go attack'n wit revenge on yer mind...
Bu' when I do, I'll kill 'em dead!!

What troubles you, Friar?
Madam.
That's how mercenaries do't!!
This is too unsightly. I cannot help but sympathize with her, being a priest that I am.
No matter how ill-natured she is, such treatment of a woman is impermissible.

Fufu... I have no problem with that. Break the mut.
Really? Fufu, I really do like you.
May I petition that you leave this to me?
Come, George, switch with him!!
However, milord Pierre, kuku... be alert in your playing, kuku... for she is a rabid dog afterall. Kuku... kukuku...
Ch-

She can be a rather demonic mutt, when she's rabid.
Show us your skill then, Friar. But be extremely careful.

Come no closer!
Come no closer, you brazen!!
Et's me, La Pucelle.
Come no closer!
Et's me Pierre.

Aye, Pierre.
Pierre,
illegitimate son to
De La Flute.
Pierre...
Very, very
slowly
Until they
can' see ya
no more.
Talk ta me in a quie'
voice, okay? Firstly,
recede into tha'
dark corner.

You need not fear a thing. Come child,
Believeth in I!!
Inta the darkness the ligh' won' reach.

Sir Pierre!
Sir Pierre!
Come now, don' cry. Raise yer head and wipe this blood off'a ya.
Like that. That is a good child.
Sir Pierre!
Ya, et's me. Et's really Pierre.
Sir Pierre!

Hei- I... Hei-gugu... have been soiled
Gu- hei- beaten by many men...
Sir Pierre. F-forgive me.
.....?
Even though I swore to you.
Higu- and hei... Been... hei...
.....raped many times.

AS JEANNE WAS SURELY CONFES-SING TO PIERRE.
HER LIPS TREMBLED AS IF FROZEN,
Hei... I apologize profusely.
SHE ASSERTED UNTIL THE END.
AS IF SOME DUTY BOUND HER,
THE FEELINGS OF THIS WOMAN TRYING TO EXPRESS HERSELF,
WERE EVEN UNDER-STOOD BY PIERRE.
I....
But I abandoned her so readily.

No need fer ya ta remember such horrid happen'ns.
The north wind was blow'n then, wasn' it.
No, it is not!
Et's all fine now.

I understand, jus' quiet down
They... hei- did horrid things to me,
hei- that I cannot forgive... hei- ab-absolutely never forgive.
It is unfor- givable!
I got ya. I'm here.
I'll never le' ya go.

We'll be together from now on.

CHAPTER 24

The night must have been arduous.
Come, arise Friar.
Good morrow, beautiful Madam. How are you this morning?
PIERRE, WHO HAD FOUND SLEEP WITHIN THE HARDNESS OF JEANNE'S CELL, AWOKE TO CATHERINE'S VOICE.
Sava bien (In good spirits).

The day of your execution is upon us! Remove those rags and put on these clothes!!
IN SPITE OF THE NOISE, JEANNE DID NOT STIR AS SHE GRIPPED AHOLD OF PIERRE'S GARB.
Awaken, you whore! You cannot sleep forever!
Madam, what of the sentry guards?
Now!!
They are changing so they have receded to the entrance.

What is it, Friar?
Madam.
Jeanne, we're leav'n.
But...

Put on Catherine's cloth'n.
We'll have her wear the execution garb.
Eh?
The plan es body switch'n. She'll be tak'n yer place on the stake.
Hurry it up, Jeanne.
Wait just a minute ...

Oh, George, morn'n.
It'll go swell this time. Hehehehe... Let me enjoy a little souvenir of hell.
Madam, 'for we kill'er, hehehe... can I get another go at'er?
Shu' i' and move!
Could ya hold back? We're in the middle of preparations.
Hu?

Wha's the mean'n of this, Friar?
Why's Madam asleep, naked?
Ugogo ...

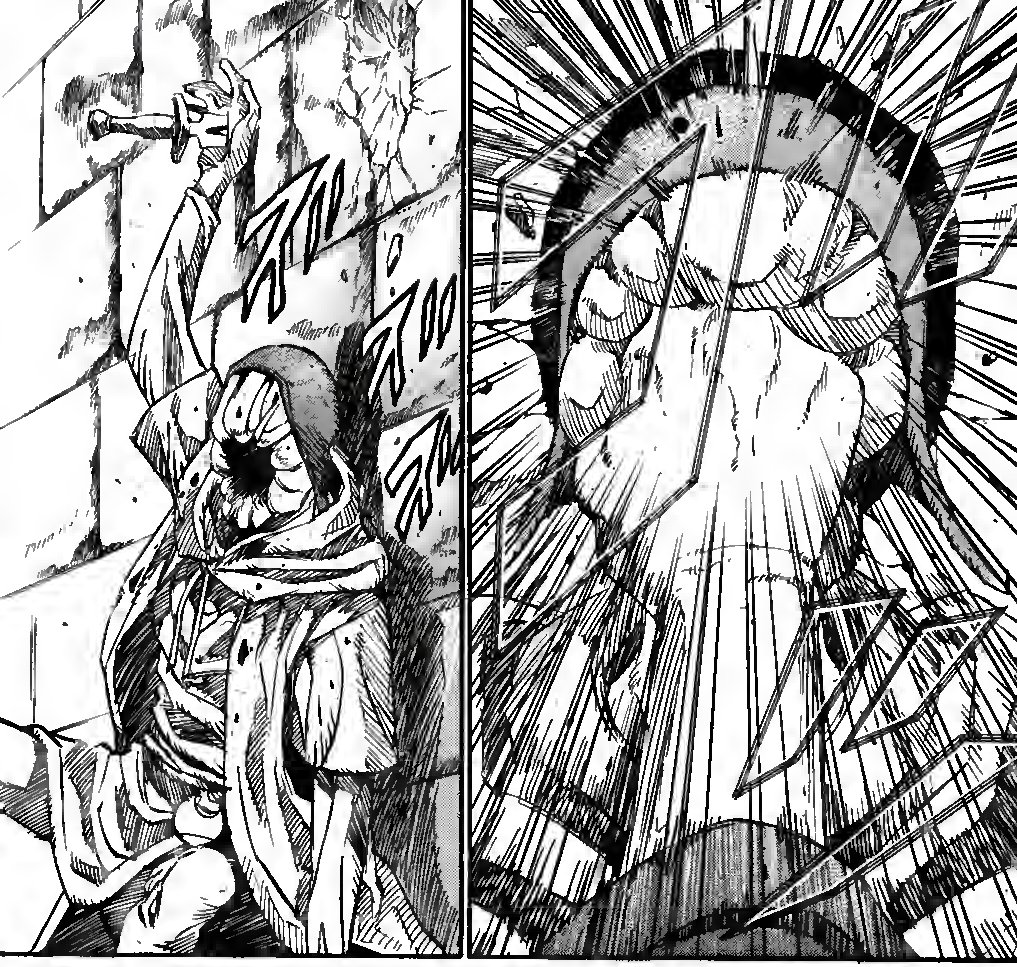
Gou-!
Here's some more.
Ch-! Died too quick.

Ahhh...

Draw it.
I will!
Gya aa!

Well thanks very much.
Ah- forgive me! I won' say noth'n or ge' in the way of yer 'scape.
Then ya never saw me.
S-so le' me go.
Beg'n fer yer life ?.....
Jus' le' me go. Spare m-my life, I beg ya. Show some mercy.
Righ'. So, please. I won' do anyth'n. Noth'n at all.

Ahh... Sphare me... Gebo... ge... Please.
She was hav'n so much fun... she even used her hips.....
Hihe... Fuhehe. I was tempted... Hehe...
Tha's... Tha's... a really whore... fer ya....

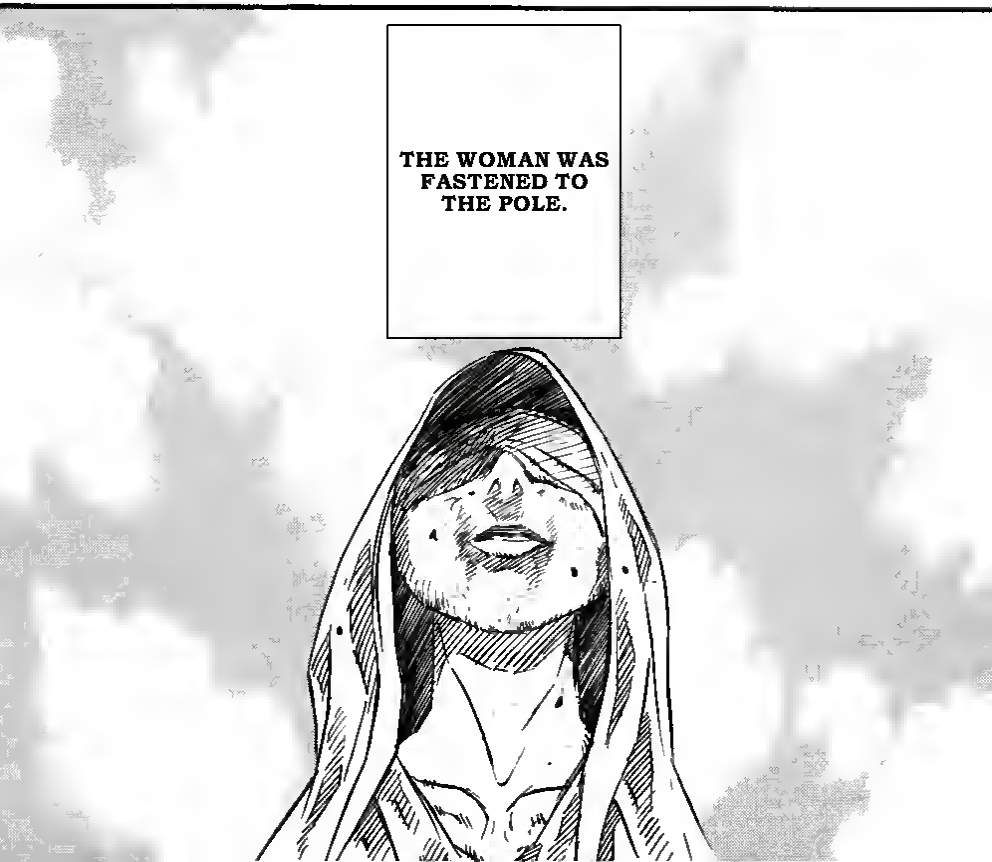


Help me here, Jeanne.
We have ta hurry an' ge' this woman in the execution garb.

When's the execution?!
Burn the witch!

A HORSE CARRIAGE PULLED UP TO THE PLAZA,
AND THE LIMP BODY OF A WOMAN WAS PULLED OUT.
ONLY A SWOLLEN FACE,
LIKELY DUE TO SHADOW, PEAKED OUT.

WAS ASSUMED TO BE JEANNE DE ARC, COMMONLY KNOWN AS LA PUCELLE.
THE ACCUSED, WHICH ALL HAD WITNESSED HER VERDICT OF DEATH PRONOUNCED THE DAY BEFORE,
GAVE NO DISTINC-TION OF A WOMAN.
YET, THE BEATEN COUNT-ENANCE,


THE WOMAN WAS FASTENED TO THE POLE.

I... think...
(Je crois).
Oi, seems she's saying she wants a cross (La croix).
I...
think ...
AA

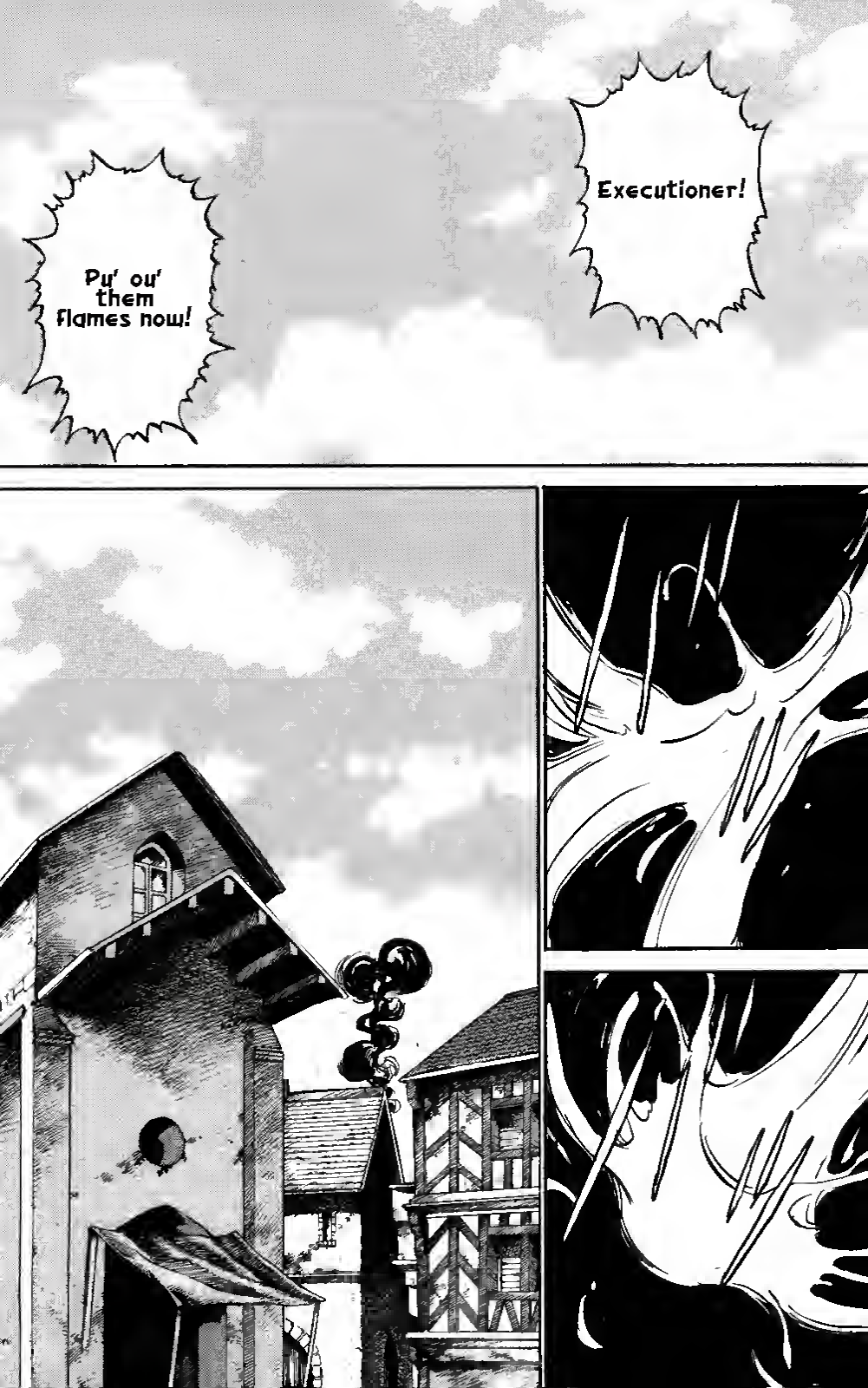
Ya! Burn 'er already!!
Ya gonna have us eat dinner here?!
Ge' on wi' it! How long ya gonna keep us wait'n?!

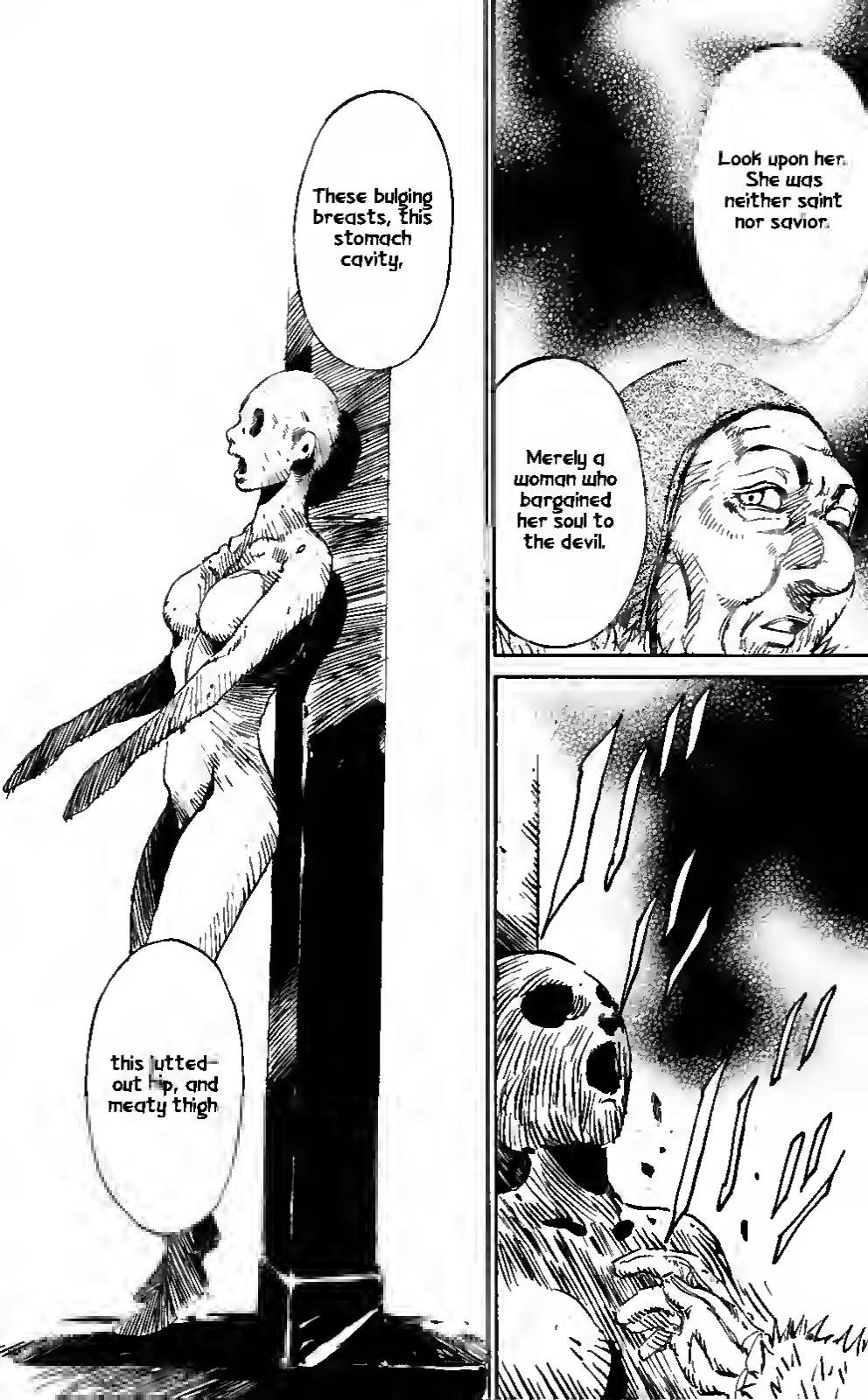
Te, Johannam, vulgariter dictam pueram.
(You, Jeanne, known as La Pucelle.)

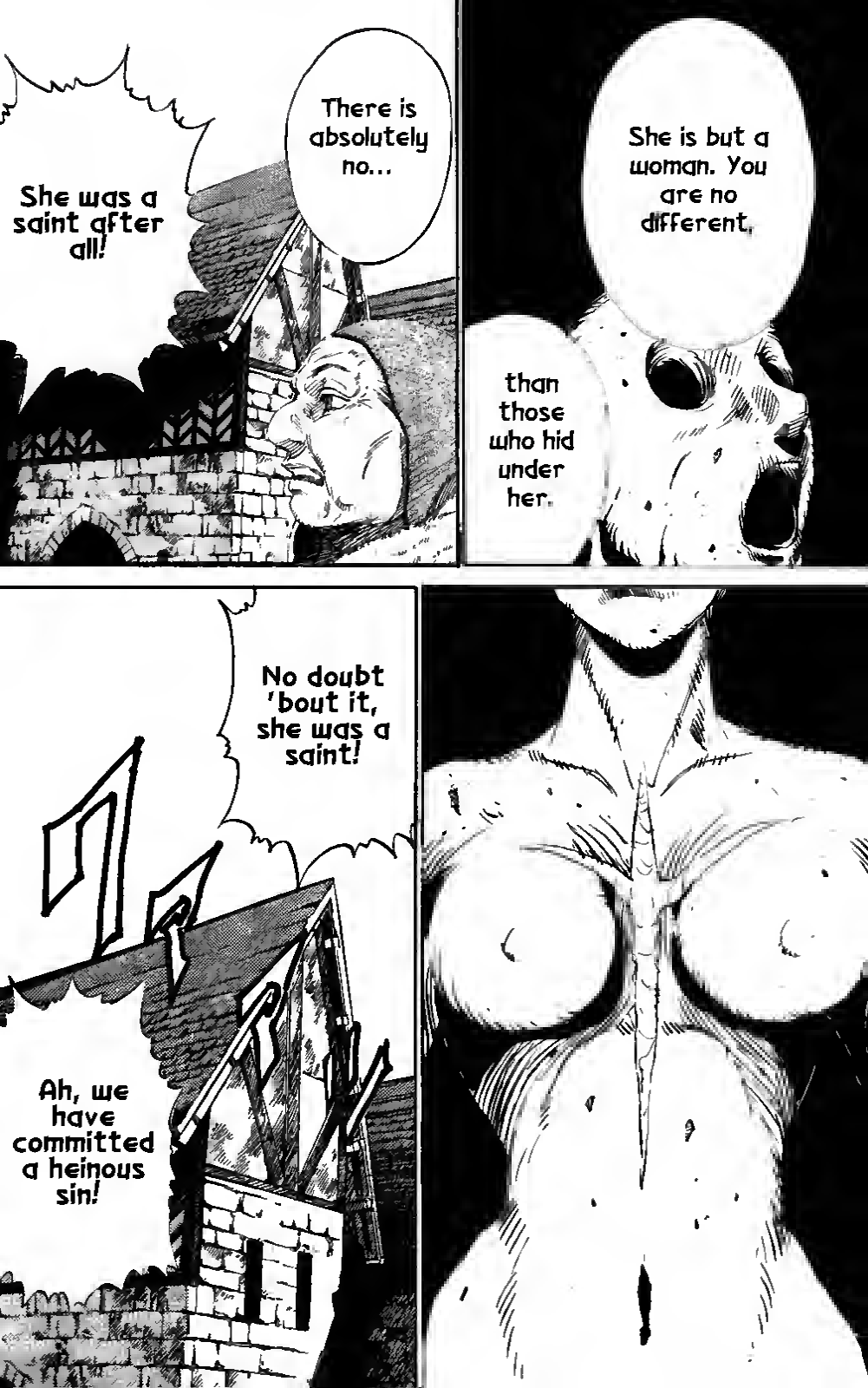
Therefor, the execution will be handled by the secular courts. You may begin.
as yer beloved Catherine is executed.
Yer there too huh, Pierre Cauchon. Watch carefully.

*Seems they're thinking she's saying Jesus, not Je suis (I am in French).

She is a saint!
We've allowed the execu-tion of a saint!
Lose not your rationality, townspeople!
AND MOST LIKELY, CATHERINE WAS DEAD.
FLAME EMBRACED THE WOMAN'S BODY.


Executioner!
Pu' ou' them flames now!


These bulging breasts, this stomach cavity,
this butted-out hip, and meaty thigh
Look upon her. She was neither saint nor savior.
Merely a woman who bargained her soul to the devil.


She was a saint after all!
There is absolutely no...
She is but a woman. You are no different,
than those who hid under her.
No doubt 'bout it, she was a saint!
Ah, we have committed a heinous sin!

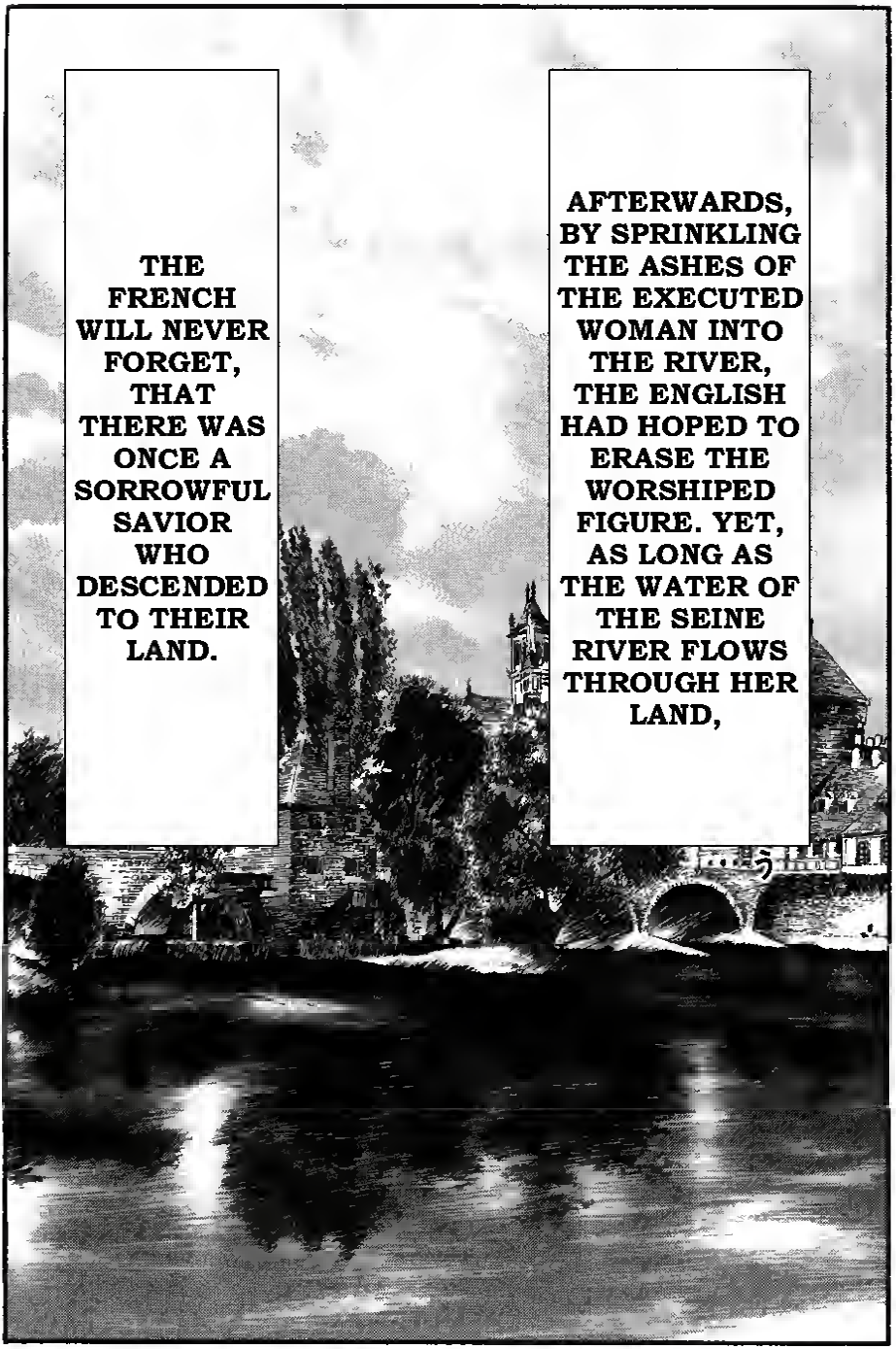
Put her to ashes!!
Hurry, apply the fire!!
We've done it now!

How's tha' Jeanne?
HE RAISED NOT A SINGLE EYEBROW ON HIS STERN FACE. HE SHOULD HAVE REALIZED THAT WAS CATHERINE WHEN HE SAW THE CROSS WOUND ON HER CHEST.
PIERRE HAD ASSUMED BISHOP PIERRE WOULD BE STRUCK WITH UTTER ASTONISHMENT, AND YET,
Huh?!

PIERRE LOOKED ONCE MORE AT THE FIGURE OF CATHERINE.
COULD HE NOT SHED A TEAR?
Friar.
Milord Pierre.
I... did embrace you.
Quite the miserable woman...
BITTER THOUGHTS WELLED UP IN PIERRE'S CHEST.
SHE HAD SAID HE RESEMBLED HER FIRST LOVE.

I will.
Even if Jeanne don't,
I forgive ya.
This was ordained by God as some kind of fate, so Catherine,
I pray to God.
And I will pray. So that you may ascend ta heaven.

THAT STRANGE MAN AND WDMAN PAIR WERE PAID ND HEED.
THE UPRDAR AT THE EXECUTION SQUARE WDULD CDNTINUE, AND THE ALMS-SEEKING MDNK AND HDDDED GIRL,
AS THEY APPRECIATED THE SDMBER CDLOR DF THE WATER'S SURFACE, THE PAIR MADE THEIR PARTING WITH RDUEN.
ONLY THE GRAND SEINE RIVER FLDWED WITH GENTLE CALM.
AND PUSHING THRDUGH THE MASSES THAT HAD FDRMED A WALL, PIERRE HEADED FDR THE CITY GATES.
WHILE EMBRACING JEANNE AS IF TD PRDTECT HER,


THE FRENCH WILL NEVER FORGET, THAT THERE WAS ONCE A SORROWFUL SAVIOR WHO DESCENDED TO THEIR LAND.
AFTERWARDS, BY SPRINKLING THE ASHES OF THE EXECUTED WOMAN INTO THE RIVER, THE ENGLISH HAD HOPED TO ERASE THE WORSHIPED FIGURE. YET, AS LONG AS THE WATER OF THE SEINE RIVER FLOWS THROUGH HER LAND,
...う

Chapter 25

PIERRE AND JEANNE HAD PASSED THROUGH THE CANYON TOWN OF LIMOGES,
AND ENTERED CLERMONT-FERRAND, THE CAPITAL OF AUVERGNE, WHERE THE BOURBON FAMILY MADE COURT.
THEY HAD OPTED FOR ONE BED TO SLEEP IN FOR THE NIGHT,
BUT WITH THEM, THERE WOULD REMAIN A DRAWN DAGGER ATOP THE COMFORTER.
Them English can' lay a finger on us this far ou'.

SINCE DEPARTING ALLENVILLE, HE HAD CONDUCTED HIMSELF AS IF ON A KNIGHTLY PILGRIMAGE.
CARRYING IT MEANT PIERRE WOULD NOT COMMIT ANYTHING.
THAT DAGGER WHICH COULD PART THE TWO OF THEM, BORE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A PROOF OF CHASTITY.
THAT WAS THE CONCLUSION HE ARRIVED UPON, AND HE THOUGHT IT BLASPHEMOUS IF HE WERE TO DO SUCH A THING.
I can't embrace Jeanne.
STILL, THE JOURNEY HAD FORCED HIM TO REVEAL A MOST REPULSIVE SIDE OF HIS.
COULD HE EVEN BE CALLED A MESSENGER OF JUSTICE?...

COMMANDING THEM TO STRENGTHEN THEIR VIGILANCE WITH UPMOST SWIFTNESS.

BISHOP CAUCHON ISSUED MESSENGERS TO EACH ENGLISH CAMP,

Normamde
oRouen
oCaen
oParis
oOrléan
Lyon
Aix en Provence
Ligurian Sea

THE RETURN TREK TOOK MUCH DISTANCE.

HEADING SOUTH WOULD BE THE QUICKEST ROUTE.

Normamc
Rouen
Paris
Orléan

TO ESCAPE FROM NORMANDY WHICH STRETCHED SPRAWLING DISTANCES FROM EAST TO WEST AND A PITTANCE FROM NORTH TO SOUTH,

Normamde

AND SO PIERRE CHOSE A WESTERN PATH.

Aix en Provence

THERE WERE STATIONED MANY ENGLISH CAMPS,

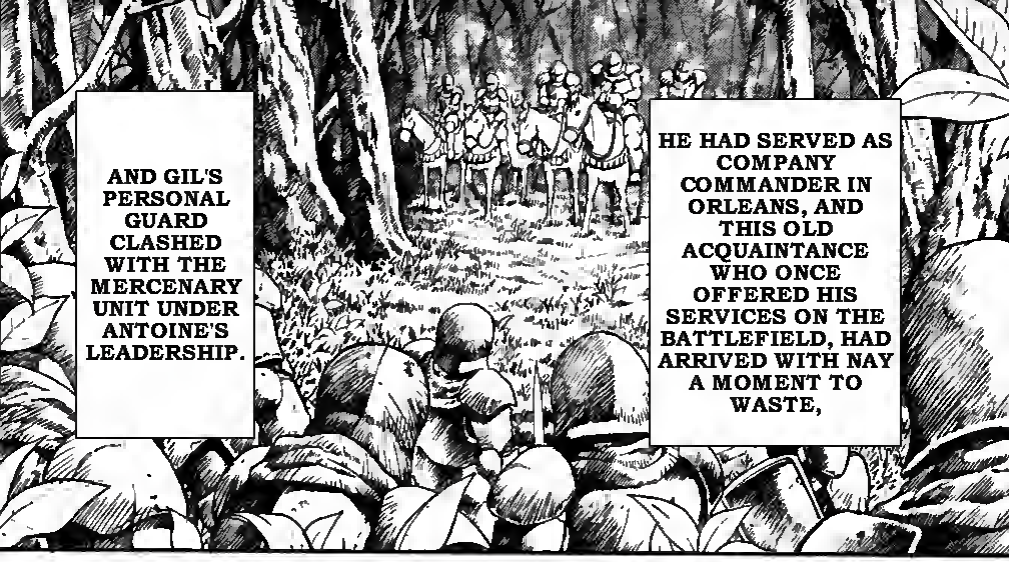
rmamde

HOWEVER, EVEN ALONG A ROAD TO THE EVER IMPORTANT PARIS,

Rouen
Saint-Denis
Paris
Lagny Surmame

Pierre, wha'cha dawdl'n fer? Ge' out here this instant!
ONLY TO BE SAVED BY SEVERAL KNIGHTS IN DISGUISE CLAIMING ALLYSHIP TO DE LA FLUTE
IN A FOREST ON THE BORDER OF BRETAGNE AND NORMANDY, THEY WERE DISCOVERED BY THREE ENGLISH KNIGHTS,
Otherwise, depart with yer tails itch'n yer balls!
Those with the courage, face me!

ONCE IN BRETANGE, THEY WERE SOUGHT BY A SLEW OF KNIGHTS NUMBERING IN THE TENS IN THE SERVICE OF GIL OE LE WHO WAS JEALOUS OF PIERRE,
She who was once a savior would be suiting for a man such as I!!
ANO THE PAIR WERE CHASED TO THE VERY BORDER OF GIL'S DOMAIN,
CAUSING PIERRE ANO JEANNE TO GIVE WEIGHT TO THOUGHTS OF SURRENDER, WHEN....
Them knights ahead be our enemy! Advance forward ye dogs!!
ANTOINE DE CHAVANNE MADE HIS APPEAR-ANCE.
Strip 'em of ther belong'ns!!


AND GIL'S PERSONAL GUARD CLASHED WITH THE MERCENARY UNIT UNDER ANTOINE'S LEADERSHIP.
HE HAD SERVED AS COMPANY COMMANDER IN ORLEANS, AND THIS OLD ACQUAINTANCE WHO ONCE OFFERED HIS SERVICES ON THE BATTLEFIELD, HAD ARRIVED WITH NAY A MOMENT TO WASTE,

SHE HAD MADE ACQUAINT-ANCES WITH A MAN IN ANGERS AND HAD RETURNED AS HIS HOUSE-KEEPER.
THEY ALSO CAME UPON LOUISE IN ANJOU.

Too much happened on this trip...
Hm?
Sir Pierre.

W-w-wha', Jeanne?!
Ru!
That was how I was known in my hometown.
Please, call me Jeanette.

I have been absent-minded in my appreciation. Quite stupid even. Even though it is the most important thing I must say, Sir Pierre, you are my liberator.
I thank you from the depths of my heart. I am eternally grateful, so much so that I cannot express it in proper words.
If ya prefer it. So Jeanette, what'd ya wanna talk about?
If there is anything, I will do it. Please merely speak the details to me.
No need. Remember, I only did it 'cause I was paid.
Still, from the depths of my heart I thank you, Sir Pierre.

But I am no longer La Pucelle.
Yer concerns are wasted on me. I was simply rescu'n the great savior La Pucelle.
For someone as insignificant as I, tha's satisfaction enough.
EVEN PIERRE COULD FEEL THAT.
JEANETTE HAD INDEED BEEN ABANDONED BY GOD AFTER REIMS.
I was the savior until the coronation of His Majesty, The King,
but once that was accom-plished...

That hoarse voice, from Our Lord, bestowed unto my ears one last utterance... which was...
In truth, I was already aware that I would be liberated. I had heard it from the voice I had since become deaf to.
It was within the Rouen cell.
yet thoughts of you flowed from my mind. If it was Sir Pierre, he would surely come to liberate me, I thought.
that he had dispatched a savior.
The Lord would not reveal who,

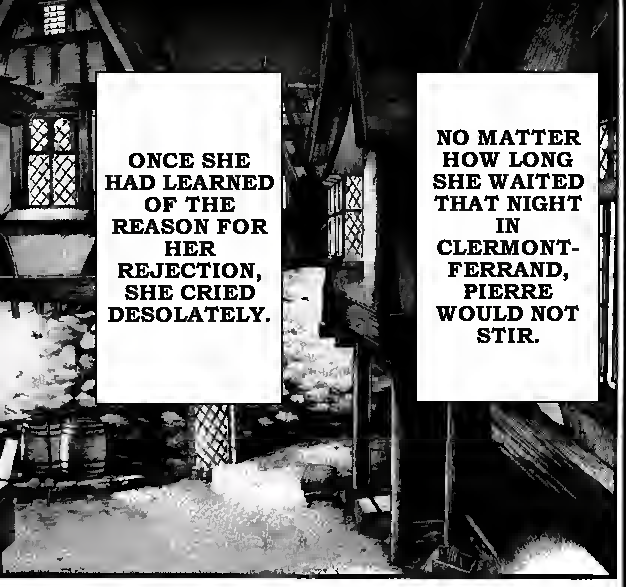
Now I am free.
No longer am I La Pucelle.
Many times I considered death, but I believed and that cleared my mind.
And then you did arrive. You liberated me from that cell and whisked me away.

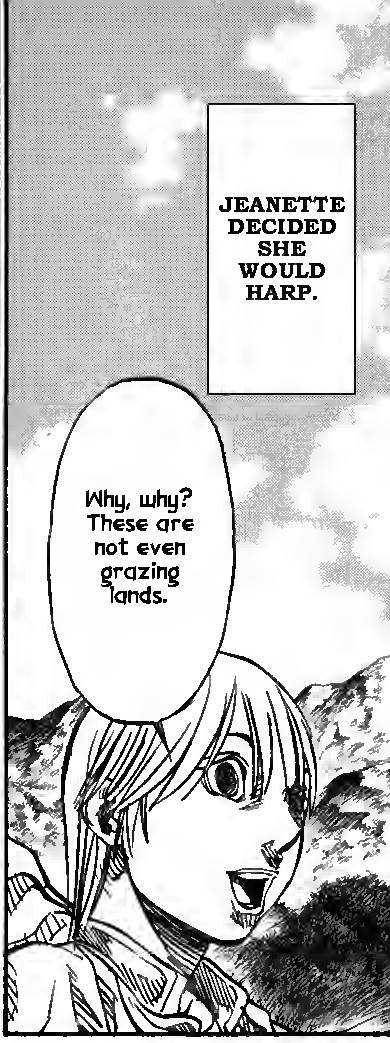
Merely...
Jeanette.

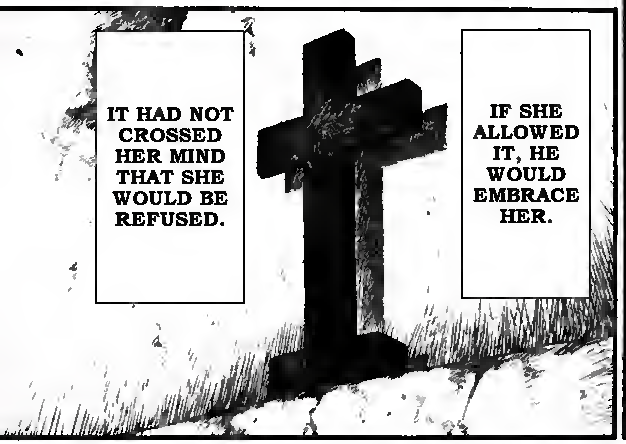
AND MADE OBVIOUS HER DESIRE TO BE HELD.
SHE UTTERED IT IN AN EXCITED TONE,
JEANETTE WAS NOT WITH HIM... IT WAS GOD.
HE REPEATED WITH STERN REPETITION, CLAMPING HIS EYES SHUT.
She can' be embraced by me!

THE THICKETS WITH PATCHES OF RED, WERE TURNING THOROUGHLY GREEN.
AND IT WAS SUMMER IN SOUTHERN FRANCE.
THEY ENTERED PROVENCE.

I have not visited the south before.
There are white horses running through the fields. Ah, look how many there are!
Aah, why are they here?
Ah, such a brilliance. I was raised in an assuredly frigid area, so I've not seen a such sun.


ONCE SHE HAD LEARNED OF THE REASON FOR HER REJECTION, SHE CRIED DESOLATELY.
NO MATTER HOW LONG SHE WAITED THAT NIGHT IN CLERMONT-FERRAND, PIERRE WOULD NOT STIR.

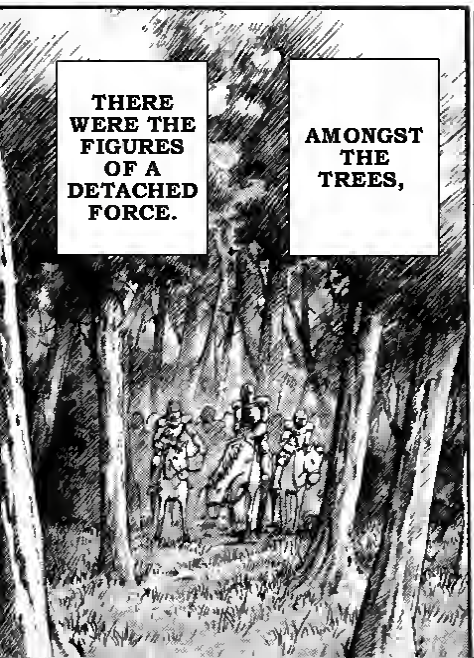

JEANETTE DECIDED SHE WOULD HARP.
Why, why? These are not even grazing lands.

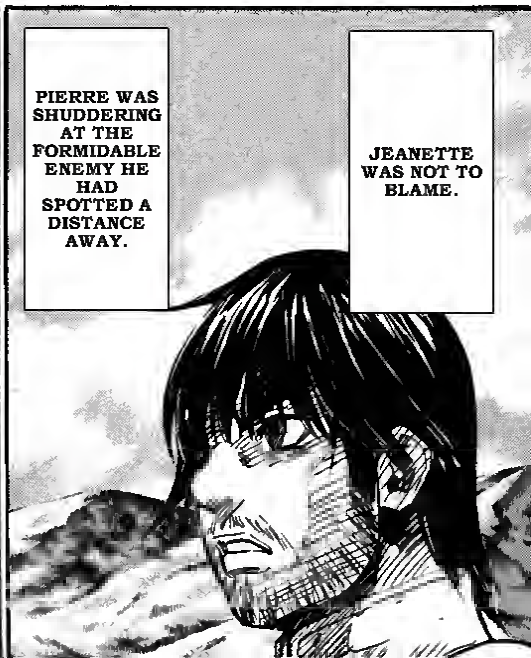

IT HAD NOT CROSSED HER MIND THAT SHE WOULD BE REFUSED.
IF SHE ALLOWED IT, HE WOULD EMBRACE HER.

AND SHE ACHED FOR DEATH.
It is because I am tainted.
SHE ECHOED TO HERSELF IN A SOUNDLESS MANNER.

HER GAZE FIXATED ON HIS BACK WITH A DOUBTFUL TINT.
ONCE SHE ENTERED HIS BED,
WITH THOSE THOUGHTS, SHE WEEPED SILENTLY INTO THE MORNING.
SHE DESPAIRED WELL INTO THE NIGHT. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BEST IF SHE HAD BEEN EXECUTED.
THE LEAST SHE COULD DO WAS IGNORE HER SLIGHTED ADVANCES.
BUT, WHAT SHE COULD DO NEXT WAS NOT OBVIOUS.
AND SHE BECAME CONSUMED BY WOMANLY MADNESS.
THOSE THOUGHTS WOULD NOT LEAVE HER,

I'm...
I'm sorry.
WHICH IS WHY HER CHEERFUL RAMBLING IS MIXED WITH THE HOT WIND OF SOUTHERN FRANCE.
THUS BEGAN HER CONSTANT CHIRPING.
Quiet, Jeanette!
Eh?
Sh- I said quiet.
They come out at last?
Ch-


THERE WERE THE FIGURES OF A DETACHED FORCE.
AMONGST THE TREES,


PIERRE WAS SHUDDERING AT THE FORMIDABLE ENEMY HE HAD SPOTTED A DISTANCE AWAY.
JEANETTE WAS NOT TO BLAME.

THE ENEMY WAS SURELY SKILLED, FOR THEY HAD SURROUNDED ALL SIDES, SO NO FUNNY BUSINESS COULD OCCUR.
THEY WERE KNOWLEDGE-ABLE OF THE TERRAIN AND THE LOWER RANKS HAD ALREADY SPREAD OUT IT SEEMED.
Wha's this?

If it ain' John!
Hey there.
Oh, ain' tha' Pierre?
Everyone's here. Tha's great.

It is, truly is. Chief!
It's him!
Ain' ya come ta greet me, John?

By order of his Highness, Philip of Bourgogne, we are to capture you!
Illegitimate son of De La Flute, Pierre, and the women in his company.
Yeah, serious.
Wha'?! Ya sure 'bout tha'?!

On the 15th of June, a messenger from Bourgogne visited.
It was stated that should we capture and take you as far as Dijon,
we'd be paid the sum of one thousand liebl in Flanderian currency.
Thus we set out for your capture!
Seize them, men!
SHUUUUUUU

John, I ain' ty'n up the Chief no matter how much ya order me.
What're ya'll doing?! Move it!
Anri is quite right.
Sell'n out Chief would be worse than pawn'n our own parents!!
It was a mere bounty head we were pursuing from what I heard, which is the reason I came along.
We can't do something that horrid to our protector!!
If I knew it was a garrison commander, would even twenty thousand liebl be enough?

What're you going on about?! It's one thousand liebl! We won' ever see an amount as high ever again!!
You're a bastard for deceiving us like that!
Shut it, Tom!
Not necessarily.
Shut it, Anri! That's why people call ya the retarded giant!!
Life ain' abou' money.
Sorry John, no matter how ya put it, we ain' go'n fer it.

I do!!
N-No one calls me retarded!!
Pierre!
Ge' off yer horse!
We'll have a one-on-one duel! Go' it?!
God, yer all a bunch of ball-less dungheads!
I'll do it myself then!

THIS MAN, JOHN, WAS ASSUREDLY DEMANDING SUCH A THING. HE WAS NOT AN IMPULSIVE MAN, AND HAD OVERCOME THE CONFLICTS IN HIS HEART TO ARRIVE AT THIS VERY MOMENT.
WHO, WITHOUT HIM, PIERRE COULD HAVE ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING.
WHO HAD UNDER PIERRE, REMAINED UNAFRAID OF ANY DANGER
THIS WAS A MAN WHO HAD FOLLOWED PIERRE AROUND.
Fine, John.
A decisive duel it is.

FINAL CHAPTER

MAKING THE SAND IN PROVENCE DANCE.
A GREAT WIND BLEW ALONG THE EARTH.
AND WITHIN THAT VORTEX, SWORDS IN HAND, PIERRE AND JOHN STOOD MIGHTILY.
THE MEN HAD FORMED A CIRCLE, ENCOMPASSING THAT DECISIVE BATTLE.

Stand back, Jeanette.
Would you stop this?! Please cease something so dangerous!!
Yeah.
John, here we go.

He's upped his skill.
PIERRE WAS THINKING... HOW MANY YEARS HAD IT BEEN SINCE JOHN HAD BECOME SERIOUS?
THE TIMES THEY HAD FOUGHT WERE COUNTLESS.
THEY HAD BEEN TOGETHER SINCE CHILDHOOD.

THERE WAS A DANGEROUS CHARGE WHEN THEY CROSSED SWORDS, AS IF THEIR DUEL WAS NOT SOME FRIENDLY MATCH.
JOHN HAD INITIATED IT.
A SPAR SUCH AS THIS, BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM,
HAD NOT BEEN HELD SINCE THEIR TWENTIES.
I can barely take this...
Ah-!

I'm dead.
!?

Wha's wrong, John?
ゲラ

Roberts, you...
Jus' go on to sleep now.
We're all comrades here. You can see Roberts don' have that much strength in him.

It ain' noth'n. Et's fine.
I'm sorry... Bro.
I don' hate 'em in Allenville...
It ain' as if I hated the laid-back life in tha' rural village.
I'm sorry. Gu- Really sorry... I- I, didn't want it to end like this.
To spend my whole life like that...
But I...
I...

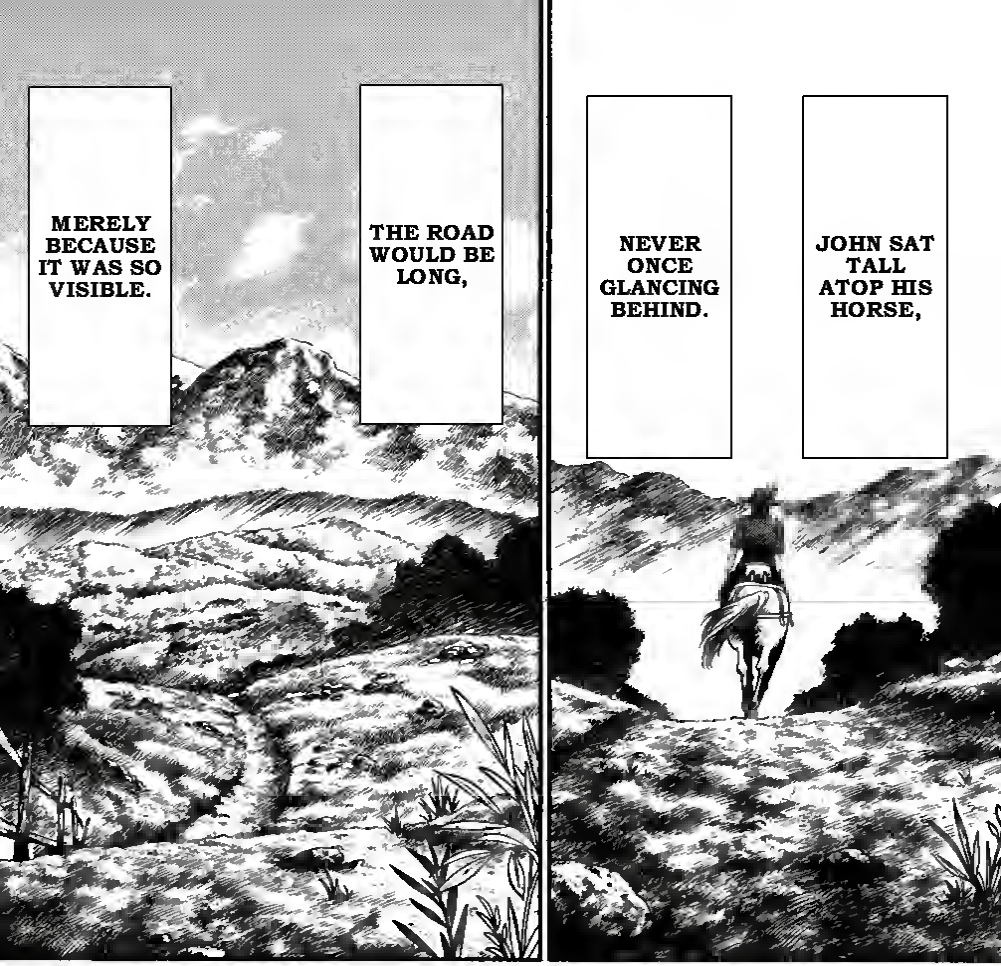
I really think of you as my real brother.
I know this happened, but believe me.
...I wanted at least, once more,
to run around the battle-field.
I'm sorry, Bro...
in Trois city.
John, remember? When we were still fool'n around,
My head was placed on the chop'n block,
and the executioner had a thick blade.
I'd done someth'n bad, and got caugh' by the authorities,
an' been giv'n the death sentence.

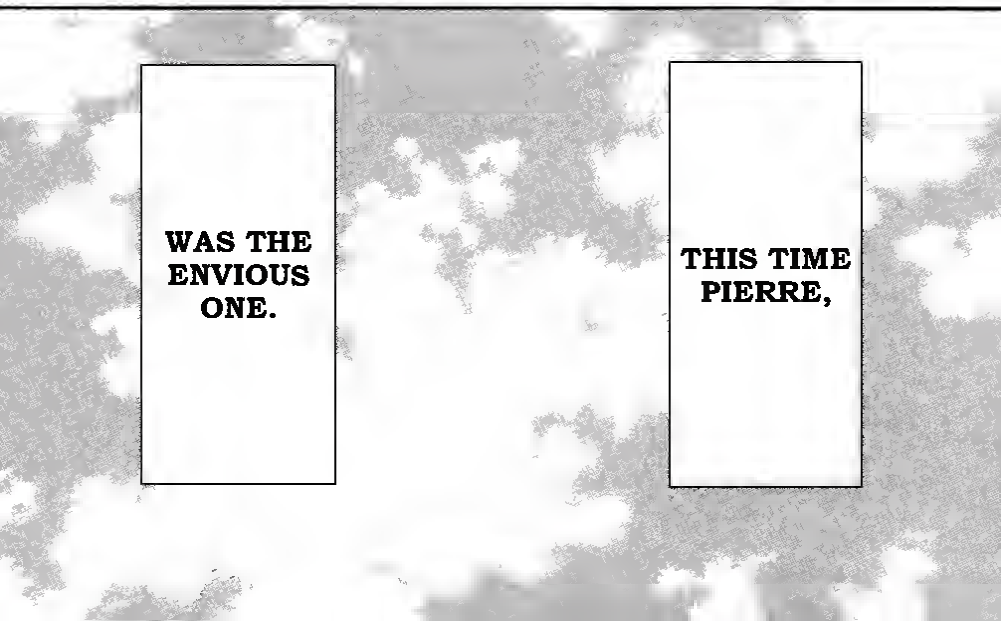
Then ya came with a mighty expression on yer face.
Even though ya were in danger do'n that, ya blew through tha' execution spot and saved me...
Heh.
Tha' was no' someth'n a sane person would do.
If ya weren' really my bro, why'd you do tha'?
Bro... Gugu...
But... I don' need ya in my troop no more.

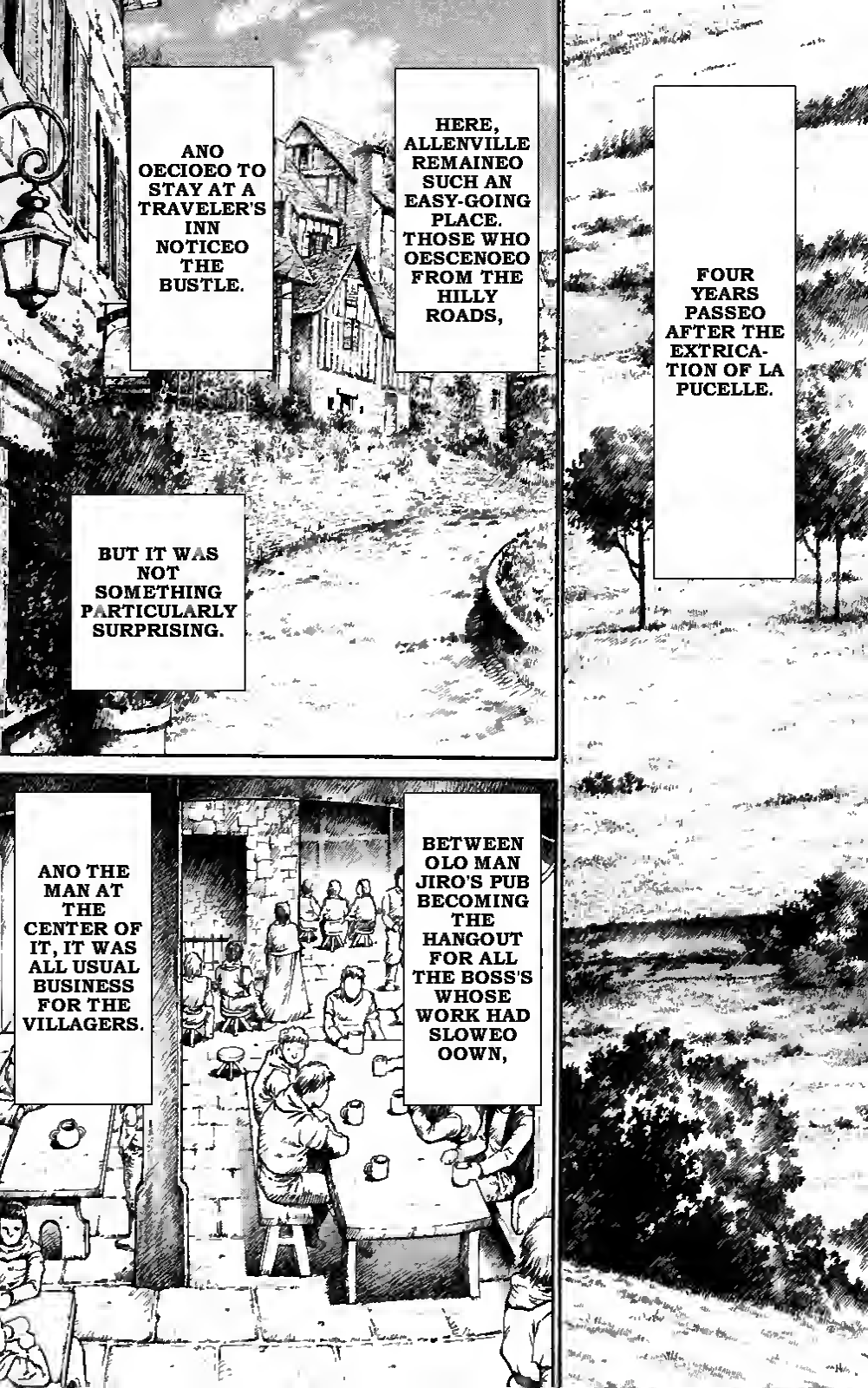
I know. Traitors have no place in it.
Here, La Hire bestowed this dagger upon me.
His Highness is preparing a seige on Normandy.
So go to La Hire!
If ya bring this as proof of my recommenda-tion,
He should accept ya as an ally.

Distinguish yerself well.
Bro...
I'm so sorry, bro.
And there... he goes.

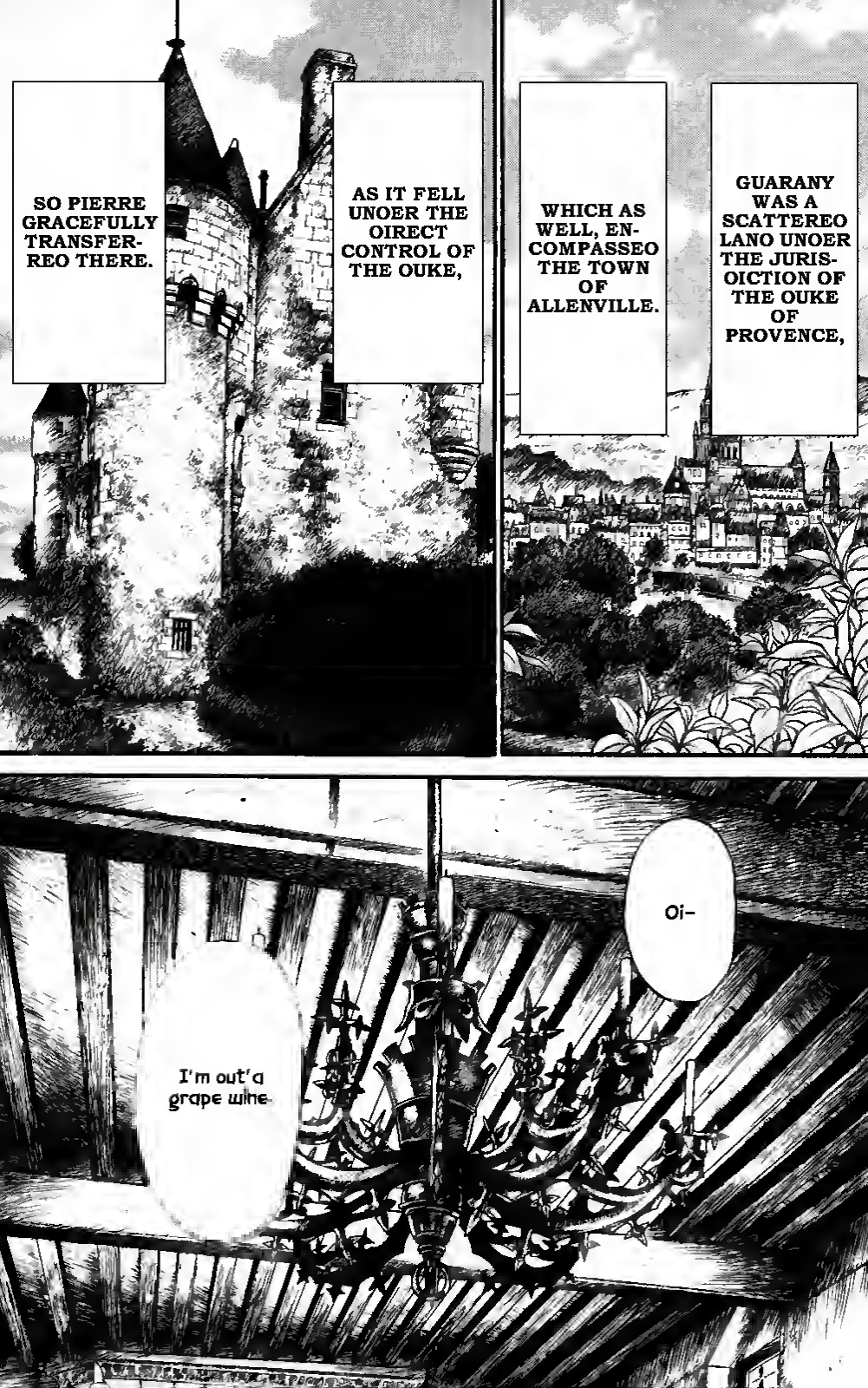
Fight well, my brother.
ta fight a mountain of English.
Off to Normandy,
WHO WAS HEADED OFF INTO THE DISTANCE.
HE MURMURED TO JOHN'S BACK,


MERELY BECAUSE IT WAS SO VISIBLE.
THE ROAD WOULD BE LONG,
NEVER ONCE GLANCING BEHIND.
JOHN SAT TALL ATOP HIS HORSE,


WAS THE ENVIOUS ONE.
THIS TIME PIERRE,


FOUR YEARS PASSEO AFTER THE EXTRICA-TION OF LA PUCELLE.
HERE, ALLENVILLE REMAINEO SUCH AN EASY-GOING PLACE. THOSE WHO OESCENOEO FROM THE HILLY ROADS,
ANO OECIOEO TO STAY AT A TRAVELER'S INN NOTICEO THE BUSTLE.
BUT IT WAS NOT SOMETHING PARTICULARLY SURPRISING.
BETWEEN OLO MAN JIRO'S PUB BECOMING THE HANGOUT FOR ALL THE BOSS'S WHOSE WORK HAD SLOWEO OOWN,
ANO THE MAN AT THE CENTER OF IT, IT WAS ALL USUAL BUSINESS FOR THE VILLAGERS.

AND SD BECAME A HDMMAGE (RETAINER) TD LDUIS.
AS SDDN AS THE ACKNDW-LEDGMENT DF LAND WAS HANDED DVER, PIERRE WAS APPDINTED PUBLIC DFFICIAL OF ANGERS,
THE LAWFUL LORD, THE DUKE DF PRDVENCE WAS LOUIS III DF ANJDU.
WITH THE EXTRICA-TIDN DF LA PUCELLE, AND THRDUGH ALL THE VICISSI-TUDES HE HAD ENDURED, PIERRE WAS APPDINTED A NDBLE.
AND ONLY DNE IN TEN NDBLES ACTUALLY PDSSESSED SUCH AN ESTEEMED TITLE DF A KNIGHT IN THAT ERA.
HE WAS A TRUE KNIGHT, DNCE HE DDNNED THE SASH AT HIS CEREMDNY.
WITH IT, HE RECEIVED A KNIGHT INVESTITURE.


SO PIERRE GRACEFULLY TRANSFER-REO THERE.
AS IT FELL UNOER THE OIRECT CONTROL OF THE OUKE,
WHICH AS WELL, EN-COMPASSEO THE TOWN OF ALLENVILLE.
GUARANY WAS A SCATTEREO LANO UNOER THE JURIS-OICTION OF THE OUKE OF PROVENCE,
Oi-
I'm out'a grape wine

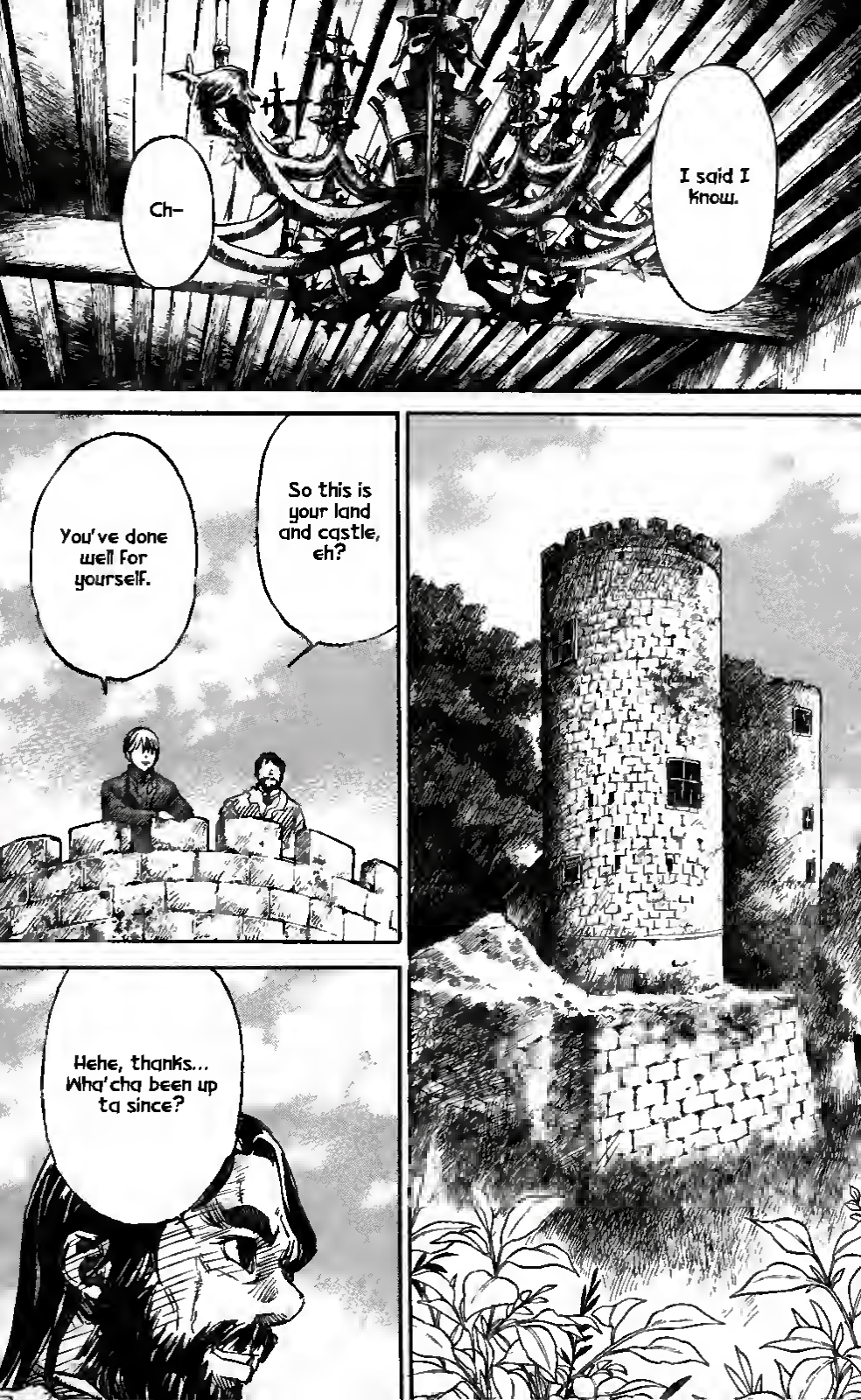
You musn't drink so much.
Bad Command, you're already such a magnificent aristocrat.
Yer suitors are gonna disappear if yer like this.
Yer so hurtful ta me, Mari.

Ke- Is tha' so. Nevermind, jus' ge' the wine, Mari, I'm wait'n.
Hmph. I'm less likely to get suitors that resemble you.
No-Way. Your wife instructed me in detail not to let you drink.
What a habit you have of saying such things to people.
Jeez, Jeanette's really a prison guard.

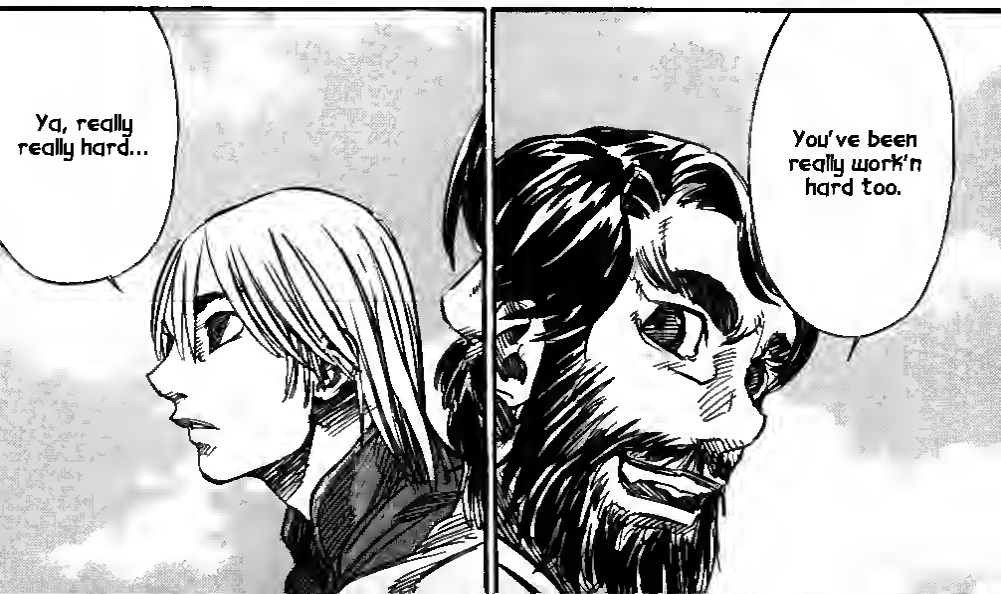
I explained abou' tha' didn' I? A travel'n jeweler came by Old Man Jiro's,
and he asked "Sir, what might your Misses chest resemble"?
Now say it once more to my face.
What problem have you with my breasts, was it?!
And I just happened ta answer without think'n.

THE NIGHT BEFORE, AS WAS USUAL, PIERRE WAS DRINKING IN ALLENVILLE.
HIS MOOD WAS FOLLOWING THE CONVERSATION AND THE TOPIC TURNED INDECENT.
WHO HAD HEARD ALL THIS WITH A RAISED EYEBROW,
WAS JEANETTE'S SECRET EMISSARY, MARI.
THE INN'S DAUGHTER HAD COME TO CASTLE THIS DAY,
TO DIVULGE ALL THE THINGS SHE HAD HEARD TO THE LADY OF THE RESIDENCE.
Master, a visitor for you.

For the love of, how embarrassing, I apologize...
Eh? Yer...
Been a long time, Bro.
Jeanette, stop i' already!
I've a guest, a guest!
I have not finished with you.
Ohhh, John. Et's really you, John!!


Ch–
I said I know.
So this is your land and castle, eh?
You've done well for yourself.
Hehe, thanks... Wha'cha been up ta since?

HE NOW STOOD IN-DEPENDENT AS A MERCENARY TROOP LEADER AND HELD HIS OWN BAND OF MEN.
AND LOOKS TO HAVE DISTINGUI-SHED HIMSELF WELL.
HE FOUGHT IN NUMEROUS BATTLES AT NORMANDY, PARIS, AND LOIRE,
AFTER THE DUEL WITH PIERRE, JOHN HAD RETURNED TO WAR UNDER LA HIRE.
AND WAS THE BEARER OF COMMAND FOR THE GARRISON UNIT OF THE KING'S ARMY.
HE HAD GAINED THE POSITION OF CASTLE OVERSEER,


Ya, really really hard...
You've been really work'n hard too.

Why'd you turn down the assassination of the English King, Henry VI?
And weren't you always gonna be Mercenary Pierre?
How'd ya know 'bout tha'?...
Hehe, I hadn' really meant ta be a traitor. Tell 'em tha' fer me.
PIERRE UNDER-STOOD THE REASON FOR JOHN'S SUDDEN VISIT.
THERE WAS FEAR OF PIERRE'S INFIDELITY BY DECLINING THE ASSIGNMENT, AND JOHN, WHO HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THESE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, WAS COMMANDED TO SEEK PIERRE'S MOTIVE.

If I killed tha' little squirt of a king, I though' Jeanette might be cross with me.
I know that... But, tell me the reason. Why'd you decline?
IT WAS AFTER THE EXTRICATION OF LA PUCELLE.
Jeanette!
Bro could've been a mercenary forever if not for you!

Et's all cause I saved Jeanette.
Bro, you're gonna be erased from history.
DE LA TREMDUILLE WAS ABDUCTED AND THE DUCHESS DF BEDFDRD, ASSASSINATED. IN FACT, THE MAJDRITY DF ALL DEATHS REPDRTED AS NATURAL CAUSES DF PEDPLE DF QUALITY WERE THE ASSASSINATIDNS DF "MERCENARY PIERRE".
THE FRENCH CDURT WDULD THEN USE MER-CENARY PIERRE AS A DECISIVE WEAPDN.
HE WANTED PIERRE TD RAISE HIS VDICE. JDHN CLEARED HIS THRDAT AND CDNTINUED TD SHIFT PHLEGM.
THE SILENCE CDNTINUED DN AND DN.

the invasion of Normandy will begin... Can't ya come with?
Can't our mercenary life continue?
Hehe. I don't know when, but once the truce ends,
War huh? Sounds fun.
JOHN THOUGHT THAT, AND WHILE STANDING NEXT TO HIM, SPRUNG SORROWFUL TEARS AT PIERRE'S FATE.
EVEN AS A NAMELESS MERCENARY, PIERRE WOULD HAVE ACCEPTED IT.

Ya, about time, bro.
I guess et's time ta replenish my stock of new material.
Hehe. My adventure's over and et's no fun jus' drink'n if I ge' scolded fer hav'n an indecent conversation.
Then guess I should start a new adventure.

MER-
CENARY
PIERRE
GRINNED
WITH
SATIS-
FACTION.
I'll ge' scolded by her again.

「週刊ヤングジャンプ増刊・漫革」H18年51号～
H19年56号まで好評連載されたものを収録しました。

◉ヤングジャンプ・コミックス◉

傭兵ピエール
❹

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MERCENARY PIERRE
VOLUME FOUR CREDITS

TRANSLATING
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